

TIER - AUTONOMIE

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Anmerkung: Im Jahr 2022 ist keine Ausgabe von Tierautonomie erschienen.



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Das Journal TIERAUTONOMIE (vormals: Journal für kritische Tierstudien*) widmete sich eingangs der Aufgabe unterschiedliche Perspektiven aus der Tierrechtstheorie vorzustellen. Inzwischen haben sich zusätzliche Schwerpunktsetzungen auf die klassischen Ismen, auf Umweltethik, Menschenrechte, Politik und 'schöpferischen Subjektivismus' ergeben. Unser Fokus ist die Sicht auf etwas, das man als das 'ökozidale, genozidale und faunazidale'-Kontinuum menschlicher Destruktivität bezeichnen kann.

Ziel ist es zum einen sich an eine erweitere Soziologie heranzutasten, die sich philosophisch auf einer Idee grundsätzlicher *Seins-Pluralität* verstehen ließe. Zum anderen wollen wir Mechanismen kritisch hinterfragen und diskutieren, die sich hinter verschiedenen extremen Formen von Unterdrückung unterschiedlicher sozialer Gruppen verbergen, einschließlich nichtmenschlicher Tiere im Sinne einer nicht-biologistischen Tiersoziologie.

Wichtig ist uns als Herausgeber*innen dabei, den Blick auf die Themenkomplexe: Tierrechte, Menschenrechte und Ökologie, nicht an die uns bekannten immer noch allgemein vordefinierten Grenzen stoßen zu lassen. So möchten wir Gedanken und Thesen von Autor*innen mit neuartigen/wegbereitenden tierrechtspolitischen, sozialpolitischen und ökopolitischen Inhalten vorstellen, um aus der Synthese durch die Gegenüberstellungsmöglichkeiten verschiedener Ansätze weiterführende Gemeinsamkeiten im Diskurs zu eruieren.

Unser inhaltliches Spektrum umfasst:

- ethische Ansätze im Bezug auf nichtmenschliche Tiere, im Sinne eines explizit nicht-biologistischen tiersoziologischen Ansatzes
- Soziologische Fragestellungen innerhalb menschlicher Gesellschaften, als kontextualisierbar mit Problematiken, die nichtmenschliche Tiere und die natürliche Umwelt anbetreffen
- Kritische soziologische Inhalte, die über eine gesamtgeschichtliche schlussfolgernde Offenheit verfügen

Die Beiträge werden weiterhin auch außerhalb der etablierten Tierrechts- und Tierbefreiungsbewegung angesiedelt sein, zugleich aber tier-emanzipatorische Inhalte mit beeinflussend sein können.

Die Herausgeber*innen des Journals sind Gita Yegane Arani und Lothar Yegane Arani im Rahmen des Projekts: *Simorgh.de* und *Tierrechtsethik.de*: ‘*Society, conflict and the anthropogenic dilemma*’ der [Edition Farangis](#).

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Das Journal erscheint in gedruckter Form als Reader bei *Nice*Swine, Edition Farangis*.

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* Anmerkung zum Thema kritische Tierstudien: Tierrechtler*innen und Tierbefreier*innen sollten mit den Grundlagen der kritischen Tierstudien vertraut sein und sie nicht mit den Tierstudien oder mit den Human-Animal-Studies verwechseln > siehe dazu, unten verlinkt, die einführenden Worte der Gründer des ICAS. Auch sollte der entschieden aktivistische Ansatz der kritischen Tierstudien, so wie er in deren Gründungsphase angedacht und formuliert wurde, nicht, zugunsten einer wenig hilfreichen zu starken Annäherung dieser drei Gebiete, verwässert werden, in der gegenwärtigen Situation, in der eine weitere Klärung tierobjektifizierender Strukturen in Gesellschaften und Kulturen unbedingt notwendig ist.

Auch unsere Ansätze sind schwerpunktmäßig abgegrenzt, aus anderen Gründen. Nichtsdestotrotz möchten wir aber gerade in einer Bewusstmachung von allgemeinen Unterschieden in Herangehensweisen den Aspekt der Multiperspektivität stärker in den Vordergrund rücken, in Anlehnung an solch einen Ansatz, wie er von Aph Ko in ihrem Buch *Racism As Zoological Witchcraft: A Guide to Getting Out* (2019) durchformuliert wurde; wir haben uns auf diesen Gedanken bezogen in unserem Eintrag > <https://simorgh.de/about/multidimensionaler-aktivismus-statt-intersektional/> [enthalten in E-Reader: Gruppe Messel, Jahrgang 6, Nr. 9, 2024, S. 13, <https://d-nb.info/1334463816/34>]

Relative Kritik schließt sich an der Kritik an ...

Wir haben uns für eine Zeitlang intensiv mit den kritischen Tierstudien befasst, uns aber in Sachen ‚Tierrechtsprogressivität‘ in eine andere Richtung bewegt, da wir manche für uns klareren Standpunkte zu unterschiedlichen Kernfragen nur eher über eine Art eigener Ausdifferenzierung erlangen konnten.

Auch mussten wir mit gewissem Bedauern feststellen, dass zwar der dringend nötige politischere Anspruch als bei den Tierstudien erhoben wird, man diesem aber nicht in aller Konsequenz versucht gerecht zu werden: Auch hier ergab sich, dass gewisse Herangehensweisen und Positionen isolationistisch behandelt wurden, während, aus unserer Sicht eher problematische Normvorstellungen und dazugehörige Paradigmen in der Erzeugung von theoretischen Ansätzen unhinterfragt kolportiert wurden.

Einige der Autor_innen auf unserer Webseite sind beim Institute for Critical Animal Studies und allgemein im Bereich der critical animal studies aktiv. Wir wählten diese Autor_innen aber nicht anhand ihrer Affiliationen aus, sondern spezifisch wegen der von ihnen behandelten Themen in den spezifischen jeweiligen Texten.

Wir haben dem ICAS einige Übersetzungen unter einer Creative Commons Lizenz zur Verfügung gestellt, die Sie hier > <https://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/journal-fur-kritische-tierstudien-german-journal-for-critical-animal-studies/> [Zugriff 22.09.2024] einsehen können. Nunmehr sind wir aber in keiner Weise mehr aktivistisch für das ICAS tätig.

Über die Fundamente dieses, als multiperspektivisch-arbeitend aufzufassenden Ansatzes in der Tierrechts- und Tierbefreiungsbewegung, und die Gründung des Institute for Critical Animal Studies durch Anthony J. Nocella und Steven Best, haben wir folgende Texte übersetzt, die wir im März 2023 für unser sich im Aufbau befindendes Tierrechtarchiv überarbeitet haben > E-Reader: Gruppe Messel, ISSN 2700-6905 > Jahrgang 5, 2023, Heft 6 > <https://d-nb.info/1282609521/34>

TIER - AUTONOMIE

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Eine Rezentrierung des Menschen

Syl Ko und Lindgren Johnson

Hintergrund: Was bedeutet es zu sagen, dass der Mensch ein moralisch gewichtiger Faktor sei. Menschen sind gewichtige Faktoren in dem Sinne, dass wir von ihnen verlangen, ihr Verhalten und ihre Weltanschauungen zu ändern. Mainstream-Tierethiker*innen wenden viel Zeit damit auf darzulegen, dass ‚Spezies‘ im Punkte moralischer Erwägungen ein irrelevanter Faktor sei, was dem Aspekt widerspricht, dass Menschen selbst das Problem darstellen, dass sie es sein müssen, die sich verändern, und dass diese ethischen Argumente schließlich auf Menschen abzielen. Es kann nicht einerseits von Menschen verlangt werden sich abstrahierend von ihrem Menschsein abzuwenden, wenn es auf der anderen Seite genau das „Menschsein“ ist, das der zentrale Fokussierpunkt in der ethischen Auseinandersetzung sein muss. Dabei geht es nicht um menschliches Überlegenheitsdenken. Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber Tieren muss in seinen eigenen Begrifflichkeiten reartikulierte werden, damit Parallelen zu zwischenmenschlichen Ungerechtigkeiten als Stützpfeiler unnötig werden. Die Gleichsetzung von zwischenmenschlicher Ungerechtigkeit mit menschlicher Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber Nichtmenschen, verdeckt den Grad, in dem Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber Tieren eine einmalige Form des Leids ist, für die wir verantwortlich sind. Solche Reformulierungen sind entscheidend, um einen kognitiven Wechsel im Sinne der nichtmenschlichen Tiere sicherzustellen.

Schlagworte: Tierrechte, Menschenrechte, Ökologie, Soziologie, Tiersoziologie

Eine Rezentrierung des Menschen

Syl Ko und Lindgren Johnson

Der Mensch als universeller Bezugsrahmen wird typischerweise als Hauptursache unserer heutigen planetaren Leiden betrachtet. Um dies klar zu machen: Es ist nicht einfach so, dass Menschen die Verursacher des Niedergangs der Erde sind, indem eine große Mehrheit ihr Leben in der Art leben wollen oder leben müssen, dass Nachhaltigkeit und die Berücksichtigung anderer Lebewesen oder natürlicher Landschaften abwesende Prioritäten darstellen. Sondern, man geht davon aus, dass es ist *die grundsätzliche Positionierung ist, in der Menschen sich selbst als Mittelpunkt im Bezug auf den Rest der natürlichen Welt platzieren*, durch die der Planet oder immerhin viele Myriaden seiner Bewohner, einschließlich des Menschen selbst, auf einen Kurs ins Vergessenwerden oder in erbärmliches Elend gesetzt wurden. Was daraus folgt, ist die Annahme, dass die einzige Hoffnung auf eine Umkehr dieses Verfalls teilweise darin liegt, den Menschen zu *de-zentrieren*, nicht allein als vermeintlich großen Nutznießer all dessen, was die natürliche Welt zu bieten hat, sondern vor allem insofern, als dass die menschliche Perspektive nicht mehr als die zentrale betrachtet werden sollte.

Diese Ausgangspunkte skizzieren zwei Seiten, die in begrenzter, aber bedeutsamer Weise an die Debatte zwischen der römisch-katholischen Kirche und den frühen säkularen Humanisten erinnern, als es um die Position der Erde im Sonnensystem ging. Kurz erklärt verfügte die Kirche, dass die Erde der Mittelpunkt des Universums sei, statisch, und die Sonne und andere Himmelskörper würden um sie kreisen, während die Beobachtungen und Berechnungen einiger früher Astronomen ein deutlich anderes Bild aufzeigten; nämlich, dass es die Erde war, die sich um die Sonne drehte, und darüber hinaus, dass die Erde sogar nur eines von vielen anderen stellaren Objekten war, die diese Bahnen zogen. In anderen Worten, die Erde steht nicht im Mittelpunkt und sie ist auch nicht einmalig. Die Folgen der Dezentrierung der Erde waren zweierlei: erstens wurden exponentielle Fortschritte in der Astronomie/Astrophysik erzielt, die unser Leben und unser wissenschaftliches Denken in vorher unvorstellbarem Maße veränderten, und zweitens fand ein Wechsel in der Autorität von Wissenschaftlichkeit statt. Die frühen säkularen Astronomen stellten die Kirche als eine glaubwürdige Quelle für Fragen bezüglich der natürlichen Welt in Frage, wodurch infolgedessen nicht nur die Position der Erde im Kosmos hinterfragt wurde, sondern auch die Stellung des Menschen in der natürlichen Ordnung.

Der Erfolg, der durch die frühen säkularen Humanisten durch die Dezentrierung der Erde erlangt wurde, befördert aber auch eine andere, entmutigende Lektion, mit der diejenigen, die den Menschen dezentrierten möchten, sich auseinandersetzen sollten, und die – eingangs – nicht nur beunruhigend, sondern regelrecht entgegengesetzt zu ihren Zielen erscheinen könnte. Die Lektion beinhaltet die sorgfältige Unterscheidung zwischen dem Akt *der evaluativen Zentrierung* und *der methodologischen Zentrierung*. Dabei ist ersteres eine

Beurteilung, die über die objektive Zentralität einer bestimmten Einheit oder Idee getroffen wird, und das zweite ist ein Anfangspunkt, von dem aus ein bestimmtes Projekt begonnen werden kann. Die frühere Verfügung der Kirche, dass die Erde der tatsächliche Mittelpunkt des Sonnensystems sei, und dass alle stellaren Objekte, einschließlich der Sonne, sich um sie herum bewegten, ist ein Beispiel evaluativer Zentrierung. Eine evaluative Zentrierung rechtfertigt typischerweise eine weitere *moralische* Schlussfolgerung, basierend auf der Beurteilung über die vermeintliche Zentralität einer bestimmten Einheit oder Idee. In diesem Fall ist die Erde der Ort eines besonderen einmaligen moralischen Narrativs, wie es in der Bibel dargelegt ist, dass die Erde angeblich der Mittelpunkt des Sonnensystems ist, sie von einer ganz anderen Beschaffenheit ist als alle anderen Himmelskörper und sie ist statisch. Die Astronomen, die für ein heliozentrisches Modell des Sonnensystems plädierten, unternahmen jedoch eine methodologische Zentrierung der Erde. Das heißt, es wurden Berechnungen und Beobachtungen angestellt, *bei denen die Erde der bewusste Bezugspunkt war*. In der Tat war es der methodologischen Zentrierung der Erde durch die Astronomen geschuldet – das heißt all die Kalkulationen und Beobachtungen wurden als auf der Erde stattfindend verstanden, Formeln und Erkenntnisse bezogen sich auf die Erde zur Venus und so von der Venus zur Sonne, usw. anstelle von Berechnungen „aus dem Nichts“ oder aus Sicht theologischer Beobachtungen aus einer „Perspektive Gottes“ – dass sie in der Lage dazu waren, die Erde somit evaluativ zu *dezentrierten*.

Nichts davon soll besagen, dass Forschungen in den Naturwissenschaften sich verhalten würden wie Forschungen in der Ethik. Es geht einfach darum, die Frage aufzuwerfen, was damit gemeint ist, wenn viele darauf bestehen, dass der Mensch dezentriert werden müsse, als ob der menschliche Bezugsrahmen und die Beurteilungen, dass menschliche Bedürfnisse und Wünsche objektiv zentral seien, identische Ansprüche seien. Wenn wir uns spezifisch den Fall nichtmenschlicher Tiere anschauen, dann wird die Gefahr deutlich, die in der Verwechslung beider Modalitäten der Zentrierung liegt, obgleich der grundsätzliche Punkt hier im Weiteren auch auf andere Fälle bezogen werden kann.

„Speziesismus“ ist der Begriff, der den weitläufigen und grundsätzlichen Mangel an Berücksichtigung von Tieren, die anderen Spezies als *Homo sapiens* angehören, beschreibt und erklärt. Der Begriff vermittelt, dass die Ungerechtigkeiten, die nichtmenschlichen Tieren widerfahren, in relevanter Weise *vergleichbar sind* mit Ungerechtigkeiten, die Menschen aufgrund menschlicher Konflikte widerfahren, so wie etwa Rassismus und Sexismus. Dieser Überlegung folgend ist das, was den „Speziesismus“ *vergleichbar zu* Rassismus und Sexismus macht, dass in all den drei Fällen eine Eigenschaft, die moralisch arbiträr sein sollte – ob Rasse, Geschlecht oder Spezies – in moralische Überlegungen einbezogen wird, anhand derer ein Vorurteilsdenken gerechtfertigt wird. Mainstream-Tierverteidiger argumentieren dann, dass die Beachtung von Spezies im ethischen Denken, insbesondere der Gedanke, dass ein Mensch zu sein ein Grund für eine positive moralische Berücksichtigung sein könne, sich nicht anders verhält, als wenn jemand die Idee vertritt, dass weiß zu sein oder ein Mann zu sein ein Grund sein könne, um als moralisch relevant bewertet zu werden.

Ich beziehe mich auf Sichtweisen, bei denen angenommen wird, dass die Spezieszugehörigkeit bei moralischen Überlegungen irrelevant sein solle, als *spezies-objektivistische* Sichtweisen. Der Spezies-Objektivist betrachtet den Menschen aus einer Perspektive außerhalb des menschlichen Beobachtenden, so dass er/sie Eigenschaften, Fähigkeiten oder Züge über Menschen in so ziemlich gleicher Weise betrachten kann, wie wenn er/sie sich irgendein anderes Tier ansieht. Für diejenigen, die auf der Seite der nichtmenschlichen Tiere stehen, lautet die Schlussfolgerung, dass es keine Eigenschaft gibt, keine Fähigkeit und kein Merkmal, über die Menschen verfügen, über die nicht immerhin eine Art von Tier ebenso verfügt. Aus diesem ‚objektiven, idealen‘ Bezugsrahmen heraus, dessen Inhalte sich auf die Naturwissenschaften beziehen, ist die Betrachtung, dass das Menschsein *selbst* ein moralisch *gewichtiger* Faktor ist, schlichtweg eine Frage des Vorurteils.

Spezies-Objektivisten können Menschen nur evaluativ dezentrieren, indem sie Menschen methodologisch dezentrieren. Diese Strategie beinhaltet eine Abstrahierung hinweg von der Tatsache, dass Menschen sich selbst aus *zweierlei* Perspektiven betrachten; die erste ist dabei – wie Spezies-Objektivisten erkennen – eine Sicht aus einer externen Perspektive, so wie wenn wir eine Fledermaus oder einen Elefanten betrachten würden. Aber Menschen betrachten sich selbst auch und *primär* aus einer *internen Perspektive*, ein Blickpunkt, den wir *nicht* über andere Tiere einnehmen können und somit ein Zustand, über den wir im Bezug auf andere Tiere schweigen müssen. Auch wenn es stimmt, dass viele andere Tiere Freude erleben und Schmerz erfahren, eine Vielzahl von Emotionen erleben, sich erinnern, sich Dinge vorstellen und so weiter, so sind wir doch nicht in der Lage auf die Internalität dessen zuzugreifen, wie diese Erfahrungen *aus derer Perspektive* erlebt werden. Einfach gesagt sind wir nicht in der Lage dazu, die Sichtweise eines anderen Tieres *subjektiv* zu erleben.

Sichtweisen, die auf die innere Perspektive des Menschseins fokussieren, auf die ich mich als *spezies-subjektivistische* Sichtweisen beziehe, zeigen auf, dass die Frage über unsere Verpflichtungen gegenüber nichtmenschlichen Tieren besser begriffen wird, indem man sie *explizit aus unserer Perspektive als Menschen* her lokalisiert, statt innerhalb eines angeblich neutralen wissenschaftlichen Bezugsrahmens „aus dem Nichts“. In anderen Worten, im Gegensatz zu den Spezies-Objektivisten, glauben Spezies-Subjektivisten, dass der beste Weg um Menschen evaluativ zu dezentrieren darin liegt, den Menschen *methodologisch* zu zentrieren. Für diese Herangehensweise liegen zwei wesentliche Motivationen vor. Zuerst erkennt der Spezies-Subjektivismus, dass das, was Menschen ein moralisches Gewicht zuschreibt, nicht eine besondere Eigenschaft, Fähigkeit oder ein gewisses Merkmal ist, sondern, *der Mensch selbst ist das Objekt menschlich moralischer Hinterfragungen, und das sich daraus ergebende Verhalten, legt die Bedingungen fest, unter denen andere Tiere (und andere Menschen) zu leben haben*. Dies ist der gleiche Grund, warum wir unsere moralischen Erwartungen beispielsweise Bruno, der Katze, nicht aufzwingen; es wäre falsch zu sagen, dass Bruno intellektuell oder kognitiv in schwerem Maße behindert wäre, oder – auf der anderen Seite – dass es ihm an Empathie mangeln würde oder er antisoziale Tendenzen hätte, und er somit nicht wirklich Teil der Ergebnisse unserer moralischen Überlegungen sein könne, so wie wir es vielleicht für einige andere Menschen sagen würden. Stattdessen gehört

Bruno zu einer anderen Lebensform, die seiner besonderen Spezies eigen ist, die uns insofern verschlossen bleibt, über die wir intellektuell keinen Besitz ergreifen können (und es auch nicht versuchen sollten zu tun) und die sich auch nicht in unsere intellektuellen Kategorien einordnen lässt.

Dies bindet sich eng an die zweite Motivation für eine Spezies-Subjektivistische Herangehensweise, die beinhaltet, dass eine echte und substanzielle moralische Berücksichtigung nichtmenschlicher Tiere erfordert anzuerkennen, *dass andere Tiere selbst gleichermaßen spezies-spezifische Arten und Weisen haben, subjektiv in der Welt zu existieren*, und dass sie über den Raum und die Freiheit dazu verfügen sollten, ihre eigenen Arten zu Leben zu gestalten und an ihrer eigenen Form zu leben teilzuhaben, ohne unsere Eingriffe oder zumindest nur mit einem Mindestmaß an Eingriffen unsererseits, in Fällen bei denen es nicht verhindert werden kann oder durch die zu einer gegenseitigen Bereicherung in ihrem Interesse beigetragen werden kann. Während eine spezies-objektivistische Herangehensweise darauf basiert nach den Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen Menschen und anderen Tieren zu schauen, als Grundlage für eine Tierethik, so akzeptiert der Spezies-Subjektivismus hingegen, dass Grenzen zwischen den Spezies existieren, und dass ein Teil dessen andere Tiere zu respektieren erfordert, eine Aufoktroierung einer menschlichen Idee dessen, was ein (gutes) Leben für sie sei, ihnen gegenüber zu vermeiden. Die Anerkennung dessen, dass *subjektive Realitäten* für alle Tiere existieren, als primäre Orientierung in der Ethik, beginnt mit der Anerkennung dessen, dass wir, als Menschen, über eine spezifische subjektive Realität verfügen, die wir offenlegen müssen (denn wir sind ebenso Tiere) bevor wir für uns behaupten können, die subjektive Realität und die Formen von Leben anderer Tiere zu respektieren.

Wie sieht es aus, wenn wir Menschen methodologisch zentrieren? Eingangs muss gesagt werden, dass eine methodologische Zentrierung des Menschen darauf verzichten würde, Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber Tieren als „Speziesismus“ zu beschreiben oder zu erklären. Da wir den Menschen nicht aus der externen, sondern aus der *internen* Perspektive beschreiben, erkennen wir, dass menschliche Ungerechtigkeiten gegenüber anderen Menschen, und Ungerechtigkeiten, mit denen andere Tiere sich aufgrund von menschlichen Verhaltensweisen konfrontiert sehen, sich grundsätzlich voneinander *unterscheiden*. Die Schlechtigkeit (zwischen-)menschlicher Ungerechtigkeiten, so wie Rassismus oder Sexismus, rühren aus dem Ausschluss bestimmter menschlicher Populationen oder Individuen aus der grundsätzlichen Idee des „Menschseins“. In der Tat greifen rassistische oder sexistische Ideologien darauf zurück, Nichtweiße und Frauen respektive, entweder als Abweichungen vom idealen Menschen oder als nicht komplette Menschen zu deuten. Ein Mitglied der Spezies *Homo sapiens* kann dann von einem anderen Menschen als *nicht-menschlich* bezeichnet werden, als *Tier*, als *Untermensch*, als *halber Mensch*, etc. und es ist dieser Mechanismus, der die schädlichen menschlichen Ismen und die daraus folgenden negativen Konsequenzen erzeugt. Diese Schäden sind normalerweise nicht nur physisch, sondern von ihrer Qualität in besonderer Weise *innerlich*, als Schmerz der Entmenschlichung. Im spezies-objektivistischen Modell kann solch ein Mechanismus nicht erklärt werden, denn aus einer externen Perspektive ergibt es kaum Sinn zu sagen, dass ein Mensch kein Mensch ist. Aus

einer externen Perspektive ist jedes Mitglied der Spezies *Homo sapiens* ein „richtiger“ Mensch und so macht es auch keinen Sinn zu fragen, warum als „Mensch“ betrachtet zu werden, eine Bedeutung haben kann in Fällen, bei denen es ausschließlich um Menschen geht. Wenn der Ausschluss von Menschen aus der Idee des „Menschseins“ ein Mechanismus ist, der hinter zwischenmenschlichen Ungerechtigkeiten steckt, dann kann dieser Mechanismus Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber Tieren mit Sicherheit nicht erklären, denn es wäre absurd anzunehmen, dass eine positive moralische Berücksichtigung von Tieren beinhalten müsse sie als Menschen zu betrachten. Und mit Sicherheit verursacht die Zurkenntnisnahme dessen, dass andere Tiere keine Menschen sind, nicht von selbst aus eine negative, oder nicht vorhandene moralischen Berücksichtigung ihrer. Eine methodologische Rezentrierung des Menschen lässt somit einen wichtigen Weg zur evaluativen Dezentrierung von Menschen erkennen: Tierverteidiger müssen einen Weg finden, der allgemeinen Öffentlichkeit und sich selbst gegenüber, Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber Tieren *in seinen eigenen Begrifflichkeiten* zu reartikulieren und zu reformulieren, so dass Parallelen zu zwischenmenschlichen Ungerechtigkeiten als Stützpfeiler unnötig werden. Auch wenn dies guten Intentionen folgt, *so verdeckt die Besessenheit damit, die Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber nichtmenschlichen Tieren zu erörtern als verhielte sie sich in relevanter Weise gleich zu zwischenmenschlicher Ungerechtigkeit, den Grad, in dem Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber Tieren eine einmalige Form des Leids ist, für die wir verantwortlich sind.* Proteste, die sich gegen zwischenmenschliches Unrecht richten, befördern zwangsläufig (und zu Recht) die Fragen dessen, *wie wir dies anderen Menschen antun können* – das sind Gefühle, die ihre langen Schatten werfen, in dem Moment, in dem wir hier das Leiden eines Nichtmenschen mit zur Seite stellen.

Zusätzlich führt die Verwendung zwischenmenschlicher Ungerechtigkeit als Schablone zum Verstehen von menschlicher Ungerechtigkeit gegenüber Tieren logischerweise zu lächerlichen Anwendungen des „Inklusions“-Narrativs, das für die Sicherstellung von Gerechtigkeit für menschliche Gruppen, die geschichtlich gesehen von der Teilhabe an der Gesellschaft ausgeschlossen wurden, essentiell war. So sollen nichtmenschliche Tiere, in Konsequenz dessen, Heilmittel für das Unrecht sein, das wir ihnen antun. Obgleich die moralische Berücksichtigung von nichtmenschlichen Tieren selten ernsthaft verfolgt wird, so ist es doch lächerlich anzunehmen, dass die Ermutigung zu ihrer buchstäblichen Inklusion in Räume, die entworfen waren, um Menschen dienlich zu sein, *die* Antwort auf die Frage dessen sein kann, was es heißt, sie in unser moralisches Denken mit einzubeschließen.

Was hier beachtet werden sollte, ist, dass Spezies-Subjektivismus so auf eine enorme Spannung hinweist, die der Spezies-Objektivismus für ein allgemeines moralisches Denken benötigt. Spezies-Subjektivist*innen erkennen an, dass Menschen in praktischen Angelegenheiten – einschließlich ihres moralischen Denkens und Handelns, das auf einer täglichen Basis stattfindet – in erster Linie aus einer internen Perspektive heraus funktionieren. Die erfolgreichen ethischen Beziehungen, deren Beispiele wir in Freundschaften, Ehen, bei Menschen im Bezug auf ihre tierlichen Freunde, in Familien, *etc.* finden, bieten eine reiche Grundlage, um zu untersuchen, wie die lokalen Schemata und Netze des Lebens, die wir errichten und erhalten, *intrinsisch* die Parameter dessen bereitstellen, wie wir uns zueinander verhalten sollten. Von Individuen zu fordern, sich aus dieser Perspektive herausnehmen – der

Perspektive auf der moralisches Denken stattfindet und aus der *alle* anderen positiven moralischen Beziehungen her rühren – um stattdessen die externe Perspektive anzunehmen, als Mittel zur Reflektion moralischer Fragen im Bezug auf nichtmenschliche Tiere, erscheint ein unnötiges Unterfangen zu sein. Wenn wir einen weitreichenden kognitiven Wechsel im Bezug auf nichtmenschliche Tiere erwirken wollen, dann kann dies nicht der Weg sein.

Ich habe versucht zu zeigen, dass ein unglaublicher Wert in der Hervorhebung einer Art der Zentrierung liegt, die eigentlich verschwinden soll, in Gegenüberstellung zu einer Art der Zentrierung, die für den Akt des Verschwindens unerlässlich ist. So wie die Dezentrierung der Erde in der Astronomie, so kann die Dezentrierung des Menschen in der Ethik tiefgreifende Auswirkungen haben, sowohl materiell – insofern, wie wir einen Unterschied für die Gesundheit des Planeten und seinen Bewohnern bewirken können – sowie kognitiv – insofern, wie wir den Umfang und die Bandbreite ändern können, im Bezug auf Wesen, die als moralisch-zu-berücksichtigen gelten sollten und wir so unsere Position in der ethischen Ordnung rekalisieren. Obgleich Menschen nicht weiter davon ausgehen können, dass sie evaluativ die Mitte bilden, wenn der Trend unseres kollektiven Verhaltens, das sich auf den Planeten auswirkt, umgekehrt werden soll, so ist es doch ein Fehler im gleichen Zuge zu glauben, dass dieses Projekt die Dezentrierung des menschlichen Bezugsrahmens erfordert. Es stimmt, dass wir versuchen die Welt zu ändern, aber um dies zu schaffen, müssen wir an aller erster Stelle den Menschen selbst ändern. Wenn irgendeine Hoffnung darauf besteht, dass eine moralische Revolution in den nächsten Jahren stattfinden sollte, dann muss dies eine Revolution menschlicher Perspektiven sein, und als solche muss die menschliche Perspektive an vorderster Front stehen und die Mitte bilden.

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Anmerkungen des Übersetzenden:

Ich verwende im Übersetzungstext für einen einfacheren Lesefluss das generische Maskulinum, damit soll inhaltlich aber keine Genderform ausgeschlossen werden.

Um sowohl Tierrechtler*innen als auch Tierbefreier*innen und mögliche weitere Tieraktivist*innen zu bezeichnen, übersetze ich das englische Wort „animal advocate“ hier als „Tierverteidiger“.

Den Begriff „human injustices“, den Syl Ko und Lindgren Johnson hier explizit auf Ungerechtigkeiten bezieht, die Menschen untereinander verüben, bezeichne ich differenziert in Hinsicht auf seine Bezugspunkte zum Teil als „zwischenmenschliche Ungerechtigkeiten“.

Ich verwende das Wort „Spezies,“ und nicht den im deutschen alternativ zur Verfügung stehenden Begriff „Art“, um das englische Wort ‚species‘ zu übersetzen, da das Wort „Art“ den Menschen sprachgebräuchlich nicht problemlos oder missverständlich umfassen könnte in den Bezeichnungen: Spezies-Objektivismus und Spezies-Subjektivismus.

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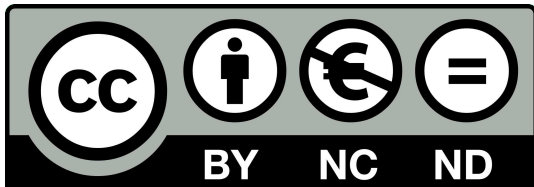
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RE-CENTERING THE HUMAN

Syl Ko with Lindgren Johnson

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“Re-centering the Human” by Syl Ko (with Lindgren Johnson), accompanying Mooni Perry’s exhibit 코로지엄과식탁위에카오스 (English: CoroseumAndChaosOnTheTable), featured at the Um Museum in South Korea (May 15, 2021 to June 13, 2021) and Mooni Perry’s exhibit 짐승에 이르기를 (English: As to the Beast), featured at Hapjungjigu in South Korea (April 1, 2021 to June 13, 2021).

Tags: animal rights, human rights, ecology, sociology, animal sociology

RE-CENTERING THE HUMAN

Syl Ko with Lindgren Johnson

The human being as the universal frame of reference is typically considered the primary source of our current planetary ills. To be clear, it is not simply that human beings are the culprits behind the demise of Earth, a large majority of whom live or strive to live lives in which sustainability and consideration of other beings or natural landscapes are absent priorities. Rather, what is thought is that it is human beings’ general *positioning of themselves as central* with respect to the rest of the natural world that has inevitably set the planet or at least many of its myriad inhabitants, including humans themselves, on a course for either oblivion or abject misery. What follows, then, is the assumption that the only hope in there being a reversal of this decay partially lies in *de-centering* human beings, not merely as the

supposed grand beneficiaries of all that the natural world has to offer, but especially insofar as the human perspective is taken to be the central one.

These claims sketch two sides that are neatly reminiscent in a limited but relevant way of the debate between the Roman Catholic Church and early secular humanists surrounding the position of the Earth with respect to the solar system. Briefly put, the Church decreed that the Earth sat in the center of the universe, static, with the sun and other celestial bodies revolving around it while the observations and calculations of some early astronomers painted a vastly different and striking picture; namely, that it was the Earth that revolved around the sun and, moreover, the Earth was one among many other stellar objects that ran the course. In other words, Earth is not central and Earth is not unique. The consequences of de-centering the Earth were two-fold: first, exponential advancements resulted in astronomy/astrophysics that have changed our lives and scientific thought in ways that were previously inconceivable, and second, a shift was implemented concerning the authority of scientific knowledge. The early secular astronomers effectively challenged the Church as a credible reference for matters related to the natural world, which then called into question not just the position of the Earth in the cosmos, but also the question of the position of human beings in the natural order.

However, the success achieved by the early secular humanists in de-centering the Earth also invites a different and more daunting lesson that those hoping to de-center the human are well advised to embrace, which may- at the outset- appear not only disquieting but outright contrary to their aims. This lesson involves carefully distinguishing between the act of *evaluative centering* and *methodological centering*, the former a judgment issued about the objective centrality of a particular entity or idea, the latter a starting point from which a specific project is carried out. The Church's earlier decree that Earth is the literal center of the solar system and that all stellar objects, including the sun, move about it is an example of evaluative centering. Evaluative centering typically justifies a further *moral* conclusion based on the judgment about the supposed centrality of a particular entity or idea. In this case, because Earth is allegedly the center of the solar system, is made of a different substance than all other celestial bodies, and is static, therefore, Earth is the site of a special, unique moral narrative, as described in the Bible. The astronomers promoting a heliocentric model of the solar system, however, participated in centering Earth methodologically. That is, calculations were performed and observations were made *with Earth as the explicit reference point*. In fact, it was owing to the astronomers' methodological centering of Earth- that is, all calculations and observations were understood to be taking place *from Earth*, formulas and findings referenced *from Earth* to Venus, *and so* from Venus to the sun, *etc.*, as opposed to calculations "from nowhere" or theological observations from the literal "God's eye perspective"- that they were capable of evaluatively *de-centering* Earth.

None of this is to say that natural scientific inquiries are anything like ethical inquiries. The point is simply that rarely is the question raised about what is meant when many insist the human must be de-centered, as if a human point of reference and the judgment that humans' needs and desires are objectively central are identical claims. If we consider the case of

nonhuman animals specifically, the danger in confusing these two modes of centering are apparent, though of course the general point can be applied more broadly to other cases.

“Speciesism” is the word that has come to describe and explain the lack of widespread and substantial concern for animals belonging to species other than *Homo Sapiens*. The term suggests that the injustices faced by affected nonhuman animals are relevantly *like* the injustices that humans face due to human conflict, such as racism and sexism. According to this reasoning, what makes “speciesism” *like* racism and sexism is that in all three cases a property which ought to be morally arbitrary—whether race, sex, or species— is included in moral deliberation to defend prejudicial thinking. Mainstream animal advocates, then, argue that species considerations in ethical thinking, especially the idea that being human can be a reason for positive moral regard, is no different than entertaining the idea that being white or being male can be a reason for positive moral regard.

I refer to views in which it is assumed that species membership ought to be irrelevant to moral deliberation *species-objectivist* views. The species-objectivist casts the human being from a perspective external to the human inquirer such that she can examine traits, capacities, or properties about human beings in much the same way she does when considering any other animal. For those on the side of nonhuman animals, the conclusion is that there is no trait, capacity, or property possessed by human beings that at least one other kind of animal does not share. Therefore, from this Objective, Ideal frame of reference, which finds its content informed by the natural sciences, that being human *itself* can be deemed morally *heavy* is simply a matter of prejudice.

Species-objectivists can only de-center humans evaluatively by de-centering the human methodologically. This strategy entails abstracting away from the fact that humans apprehend themselves from *two* perspectives; the first is, as species-objectivists note, from an external perspective, just as when we apprehend a bat or elephant. But humans also *and primarily* apprehend themselves from an *internal perspective*, a vantage point we *cannot* apprehend about any other animal and, so, a state about which we must remain silent with regard to other animals. Although it is true that many other animals enjoy pleasure and suffer pain, experience a variety of emotions, remember, imagine, and so forth, we are unable to access the interiority of what these experiences are like *from their perspective*. Simply put, we are unable to *subjectively* experience the vantage point of another animal.

Views that focus on the internal perspective of being human, which I refer to as *species-subjectivist* views, argue that the question about our obligations to nonhuman animals is better reflected upon by situating it *explicitly from our perspective as humans* as opposed to a supposedly neutral scientific frame of reference “from nowhere”. In other words, contrary to species-objectivists, species-subjectivists believe the best way to evaluatively de-center human beings is to center humans *methodologically*. There are two main motivations for this approach. First, species-subjectivism acknowledges that what attributes to human beings a moral heaviness is not some distinct property, capacity, feature or trait but rather *it is the human that is the proper object of the human moral inquiry and whose subsequent behavior*

sets out the conditions under which other animals (and other humans) must live. This is the same reason we do not foist our moral expectations upon, say, Bruno the family cat; it is not right to say that Bruno is intellectually or cognitively disabled to a severe degree, or- on the other hand- lacks empathy and harbors antisocial tendencies, and so he cannot be reasonably asked to participate in the results of our moral deliberations, such as we might say for some humans. Instead, Bruno belongs to an entirely different form of life, which is specific to his species, subjectively closed to us and which we cannot (and ought not attempt to) take intellectual possession of or subsume under our intellectual rubrics.

This ties closely into the second motivation for a species-subjectivist approach, which is that real and substantial moral regard for nonhuman animals necessitates appreciating *that other animals themselves too have species-specific ways of subjectively existing in the world* and that they should have the space and freedom to set up and participate in their own forms of life without our interference or at least with only minimal interference in cases where it cannot be prevented or contributes to their flourishing for mutual enrichment. Whereas a species-objectivist approach rests on looking for commonalities between humans and other animals as the ground for an animal ethic, species-subjectivism accepts that boundaries exist between the species and that part of respecting other animals demands resisting imposition of a human idea of what is a (good) life onto them. The appreciation of there being *subjective realities* for all animals as the primary orientation of ethics starts with appreciating that we, as humans, have a specific subjective reality, which must be confessed (for we, too, are animals) before making claims about respecting the subjective reality and forms of life belonging to other animals.

What does it look like to center humans methodologically? To start with, a methodological centering of the human would resist describing or explaining animal injustice as “speciesism.” Since we are considering the human not from the external perspective but the *internal* one, we find that human injustices and injustices other animals face due to human behavior are fundamentally *unlike* one another. The badness of human injustices such as racism or sexism arise from the exclusion of certain human populations or individuals from the very idea of “human.” In fact, racist and sexist ideology turn on interpreting non-whites and women, respectively, as either deviations from the ideal Human or unactualized Humans. A member of the species *Homo Sapiens*, then, can be rendered a *non-human*, an *animal*, a *subhuman*, an *inter-human*, etc., by another human being and it is this mechanism that generates the human pernicious -isms and the subsequent negative consequences that follow. These harms are usually not only physical but constitutionally *internal* of a certain type, the pain of dehumanization. Under a species-objectivist model, such a mechanism cannot be explained because, from an external perspective, it makes little sense to say that a human being is not a human being. From an external perspective, any member of the species *Homo Sapiens* is human “proper” and so it fails to make sense of why being considered “human” matters even in cases where only human beings are involved.

If excluding human beings from the idea of “human” is the mechanism behind human injustices, then certainly this mechanism cannot explain or describe animal injustice, for it

would be bizarre to assume that positive moral regard for animals must involve conceiving of them as human beings. And certainly acknowledging that other animals are not human does not, in and of itself, necessitate negative or absent moral regard for them. Re-centering the human methodologically, then, reveals an important path to de-centering humans evaluatively: animal advocates must find a way to re-articulate or reformulate to the general public and themselves animal injustice *in its own terms* such that parallels to human injustices are not necessary as buttresses. Though well-intentioned, the obsession with modeling nonhuman animal injustice as if it were relevantly like human injustice obscures the degree to which animal injustice is a unique *form of suffering for which we are responsible*. Protest aimed at human injustices necessarily (and rightly) cues sentiments of the form, *how can we do this to another human being?*, sentiments that cast a long shadow when the suffering of a nonhuman is set beside it.

Additionally, using human injustice as a template for understanding animal injustice logically leads to ridiculous applications of the “inclusion” narrative, which has been essential for ensuring justice for human groups historically excluded from participating in society, to the case of nonhuman animals as a salve for the wrongs we commit upon them. Though moral consideration of nonhuman animals is seldom seriously taken up, is it ludicrous to assume that encouraging their literal inclusion into spaces designed for human flourishing is *the* answer to what it is to include them in our moral thought.

What should be of note here is that species-subjectivism, then, hints at an incredible tension species-objectivism requires for general moral thinking. Species-subjectivists acknowledge human beings operate primarily from the internal perspective in practical matters, which include moral matters, carried out on a daily basis. The successful ethical relationships exemplified by friendships, marriages, humans with their animal companions, families, *etc.* provide rich grounds for investigating how the local schemas and webs of lives we build and lead *intrinsically* supply the parameters for how we ought to interact with one another. Asking individuals to remove themselves from this perspective, the perspective at which moral thinking occurs and in which *all* other positive moral relationships inhere, to take up the external perspective as means to reflect on moral matters with respect to nonhuman animals seems a foolish ambition. If we wish to effect a widespread cognitive shift about nonhuman animals, this cannot be the way forward.

I have tried to show here that there is incredible value in making salient a kind of centering that ought to vanish versus a kind of centering that is indispensable to that disappearing act. Like the de-centering of Earth in astronomy, the de-centering of the human in ethics can have profound effects, both material- insofar as we can make a difference to the health of the planet and its dwellers- as well as cognitive- insofar as we can shift the scope and range of beings that qualify as morally considerable, thus recalibrating our position in the ethical order. Although humans cannot continue to believe they are evaluatively central if the trend of our collective behaviors affecting the planet will be reversed, it is a mistake to also believe this project necessitates de-centering the human frame of reference. It is true that we are trying to change the world, but to do so mostly requires changing the human. If there is any hope that a

moral revolution will come to fruition in the coming years, it will have to be a revolution of the human perspective and, as such, the human perspective must remain front and center.

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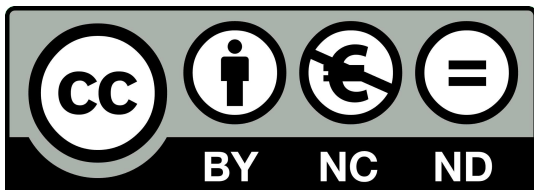
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Series: National Socialist Racism and Genocide; Photographic Sociology and Research Methodology by Miriam Y. Arani (1)

Translated and edited by Gita Marta Yegane Arani

This series:

This series is dedicated to the research and legacy of my sister Dr. Miriam Yegane Arani / Miriam Y. Arani – born in Siegen-Weidenau on 23.01.1964 – passed away in Frankfurt am Main on 16.07.2019. My sister chose in her work on National Socialist racist policies, foremostly as implemented in the so called Reichsgau Wartheland, a criminological approach, through the development of a historiographical-sociological methodology for the analysis of photographic materials in conjunction with the study of archival materials through source-critical and contextualized photo-historical proofs of authenticity. Meanwhile Miriam took a pedagogical approach to thus facilitate the introduction of the difficult subject matter in order to provide a broad, informed perspective on the events, especially in the "Reichsgau Wartheland", in a way which should be equally accessible to every interested reader.

Tags: national socialism, ns racism, photography, sociology, methodology

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Miriam Y. Arani, Miriam Djamileh Yegane Arani, Dissertation at the UDK Berlin, 2007:

Fotografische Selbst- und Fremdbilder von Besatzern und Besetzten während des Zweiten Weltkriegs am Beispiel der Fotografien von Polen und Deutschen während der nationalsozialistischen Besatzung 1939-1945 in Poznan/Posen und Wielkopolska/Großpolen (sog. Reichsgau Wartheland)

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Abstract: Images of the Self and the Other under Nazi-Occupation in the ‘Reichsgau Wartheland’

German and Polish photographic images of the Self and the Other in Reichsgau Wartheland, 1939-1945.

With particular emphasis on the Wielkopolska region.

The Second World War began in September 1939 with Germany’s attack on Poland. “Reichsgau Wartheland” was a German administrative unit created from former Polish territory after the military occupation. It became a model for the implementation of the Nazi regime’s population and land settlement policies for Eastern Europe. The region, which was mainly populated by Poles, was to be completely “Germanized” within ten years. As a result, from the end of 1939, several hundred thousand Polish citizens were expelled and their property was expropriated. The Jews among them were concentrated in ghettos and murdered. Reich Germans and ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche) from Eastern Europe were settled in place of the expelled Polish citizens. Nazi race ideology decreed that these members of the German “master race” were now to rule over Polish work slaves. In relative terms, Poland was the country which suffered the highest percentage of civilian casualties during the Second World War. As a result there are still significant communication problems between the two societies concerning the past.

According to the psychological communication theory of Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin and Don Jackson, human beings define their relationships to each other primarily in non-verbal ways, so that the “power of images” increases in conflict relationships.

Consequently, a conflict can be expressed in a visually symbolic manner even though it can no longer or not yet be articulated verbally. Working within the framework of this theory, I analysed photographs created under German occupation in the Wielkopolska region, the centre of the new “Reichsgau Wartheland”, as a medium of visual communication. My aim was to examine German and Polish images of the Self and the Other as reflected in the photographs taken during the period of war and occupation.

In order to make the most valid and reliable statements about the pictures, I examined approximately 30,000 photographs from three West German, and more than a dozen Polish archives, museums and libraries. From these, approximately 10,000 contemporary prints were classified as relevant picture sources from the place and period under investigation. These prints make up the body of source material subsequently analysed and interpreted. The photographs were described and compared, using methods of historical source criticism and art-historical techniques for the safeguarding of objects.

Many of the photographers could not be identified, nor could the circumstances under which many of the photographs were taken be individually reconstructed. Consequently, the form of the photographic primary sources themselves became the basis for statements about their creators and their purpose. Theoretical and methodological approaches from the social sciences were used in the analysis and interpretation of the mass of photographs that have survived.

The body of source material thus generated allowed me to make statements about national and institutional differences in the preservation of photographic material. In the West German institutions only photographs taken by Germans had been preserved, while the Polish institutions held pictures taken by both Germans and Poles. After the war the photographs from the “Reichsgau Wartheland” were preserved with differing national thematic emphases. Pictures that were incompatible with the collective memory of the respective nation state were generally not preserved in public institutions. Where such pictures were preserved, they existed only on the margins of the collections.

In addition, the body of source material enabled me to make statements about German and Polish group specific photographic images of the Self and the Other. These images are not identical with the nationally homogenous images of the Self and the Other assumed by stereotype research. The empirical findings contradicted the assumption that nationally homogenous German and Polish photographic auto- and heterostereotypes existed even during the war. The homogenisation of national images of the Self and the Other is only evident in those photographs produced and disseminated by institutions.

The description and critical comparison of the pictures as physical objects, including aspects such as format, and of the characteristics of picture composition and subject, enabled me to

reconstruct several significant creator groups. Each group is typified by a different group style, and each style is connected with particular social functions of the medium of photography:

- the function of individual self-representation within the context of a civil society (studio portraits)
- a function of private memory (“snaps”, private photo albums)
- the function of social control (police use of photographic records)
- the function of mass communication (press photography and photo-journalism)

During the war German and Polish portrait photographers, working in their studios, were often more faithful to their profession than to changing political ideologies. They photographed their customers as they wished to be photographed. The portrait photographer has traditionally masked flaws in a subject’s appearance in order to provide the “nice” picture that most customers want. The techniques employed to achieve this include a flattering use of light, conventionalised studio staging and subsequent retouching. The images created in the portrait studios during the war years were based on the same principles. Where both parties agreed to the transaction, these principles held good, regardless of the nationality of photographer and customer.

The photographs with the widest public reach were press photographs. The Nazi regime controlled the production and distribution of these photographs, just as they controlled the entire German press. The Nazi Party press experts were well aware of the propaganda effect of photographs, which are considered by the public to be more reliable than words. When the war began, close-up images of corpses were presented to the German public in print media targeted at various audiences. The images supposedly depicted ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche) murdered by “brutish” Poles. These atrocity pictures were published repeatedly during the war. For the Germans, they became a visual symbol of “Polish cruelty”, seeming to justify acts of aggression towards Poles.

The entire German press received daily instructions from the Ministry of Propaganda as to which subjects they could cover, and how those subjects were to be presented. Basic instructions for portraying Poles in the press were issued in October 1939. The Polish press in the “Reichsgau Wartheland” was closed down, and in its place a Nazi Gau press, from which Poles were excluded, was set up. The Ostdeutscher Beobachter (East German Observer), a German daily newspaper published in Poznan, and other print media used photographs repeatedly to illustrate an antagonism between “German” order and culture, on the one hand, and “Polish” disorder and lack of culture on the other. The photographs from the Warthegau published in the Ostdeutscher Beobachter create the illusion that the area was populated entirely by Germans, whose alleged superiority was manifested in major economic and cultural structural change. The Poles, who made up three quarters of the population, were generally not represented pictorially. The restrictions imposed by the Nazi propaganda

institutions led to a national homogenization of German images of the Self and the Other in press photography.

The German SS and police were collective originators of numerous photographs for internal purposes. These photographs produced by police institutions were not made public at the time. They can be divided into roughly two types.

1. A standardised use of photography for criminal identification in the form of a three part photograph, giving a front, profile and three quarter view of the head. At the beginning of the 20th century this type of picture established itself as the model for the photographic depiction of criminals. The Polish people had been criminalised en masse, as an ethnic group, by the Nazi regime's "racial policy". Thus in "Reichsgau Wartheland" they became the favoured object of this type of photographic record.

2. Non-professional photography also appeared in internal police reports documenting the performance of the police. Most of the photographs used for this internal reporting were snapshots. Some of these images depicted the police in their working relationship to the Polish citizens. The SS and police photographs I located were nationally homogenous in so far as all the photographers were German, and the Poles were, without exception, the objects of the photographs.

Another large group of images is made up of snapshots taken by Germans. The creators of these pictures chose their subjects freely, and did not intend for their photographs to be seen by the general public. The individual priorities evident in this non-professional photography give rise to a generally greater degree of heterogeneity in the images of the Self and the Other. However, there is a difference in subject matter between the snapshots taken by Germans preserved in West Germany and those preserved in Poland. For example, photographs taken by Germans, showing public executions of Polish citizens by Germans were, with one exception, preserved only in Polish institutions. The West German picture collections consisted predominantly of snapshots taken by Germans, dealing with domestic German relationships. In Poland, on the other hand, the institutions preserved many snapshots taken by Germans, illustrating the violent relationship between Germans and Poles. After the war, in the People's Republic of Poland, enlarged photographs of public executions of Polish citizens, taken by Germans, were published repeatedly and became the visual symbols of "German barbarism".

Under the German occupation, Poles in "Reichsgau Wartheland" had to work in German managed businesses. More than one hundred Poles worked as photographic laboratory assistants in such businesses. In the darkrooms they became invisible observers, witnesses to what the Germans were photographing during the war. At first, the occupying power had restricted the activity of Polish photographers in the Warthegau to the private sphere, but in the summer of 1941 even the private possession and use of cameras was forbidden. Only a minority of Poles continued to photograph in secret after this ban. The photographs taken by Poles which have been preserved are heterogeneous. Many Poles collected photographs taken by Germans.

Polish laboratory assistants often secretly made extra prints of photographs brought in by Germans to be developed. Some lab assistants passed on photographs showing Nazi crimes or German troop movements to the organised Polish resistance. The most extensive documentation of the anti-Polish occupation policy in the “Gau capital” of Poznan was preserved by the Szare Szeregi, the Polish boy and girl scouts who joined the resistance at the start of the war. From 1940 onwards, they photographed numerous signs in public places forbidding Poles to enter parks, playgrounds, sports grounds, museums, libraries etc. Other photos taken by the Szare Szeregi show the secret schools they organised. The significance of these pictures can only be understood against the background of cultural and educational policy in the Warthegau at this time.

The Polish population were denied access to education by the Nazi occupation force. In photographs the Poles presented themselves as equals of the Germans, and they used photographic representations of Polish culture to counter the occupiers’ assertion that they were an uncultured people. The German public are unfamiliar with Polish photographic images of the Self from the war years.

These images are by no means limited to a visual self representation as victim.

Miriam Yegane Arani, Berlin, November 2009

Miriam Y. Arani: Fotografische Selbst- und Fremdbilder von Deutschen und Polen im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Region Wielkopolska, Hamburg 2008.

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Excerpt from Chapter II.: Methods and Findings

II. Methods and Findings

1. Methods of source criticism of historical photographic images [1]: the external and the internal criticism of the source

[Excerpt pp. 67-69]

Against the background of the controversies surrounding the photographs of the so-called Wehrmacht exhibition [Wehrmachtsausstellung] [2], the necessity of a source-critical approach to historical photographs has become particularly clear. Although the general statements conveyed in this exhibition were scientifically secured, controversies developed over the photographs presented, which had not been subjected to a thorough and careful source criticism by the exhibition organizers. It had also not been sufficiently taken into account that the locations where most of the photographs were taken were outside of today's German territory and that the events that took place there at that time, which are depicted in the photographs, cannot be reliably reconstructed solely on the basis of German-language sources and secondary literature [3]

The present study aims to objectify the problems of source identification, source criticism, and interpretation associated with photographs from the World War II period. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss source-critical methods in more detail. [4] There is no method of source criticism for photographs developed by university-based historical scholarship. [5] This has led to the assumption among numerous historians that there are no specific methods for critiquing photographic image sources. But fruitful methodological approaches to the criticism of photographic sources do exist, especially in art history, ethnology, and the social sciences:

1) The art historical methods that can also be applied to non-art photographs include, in particular, object identification and determination, comparative vision, and Panofsky's iconography and iconology (insofar as it can be applied). In particular, the procedures of item securing and item description [6] commonly used in art history are very pertinent, as they lead one to pay more attention to the overall nature of an individual image – both the image carrier and the image content – and to view it analytically.

2) A number of methodological approaches to the critique of photographic image sources have been formulated specifically in relation to photographic sources on history. [7] This is a transfer of source-critical methods commonly used in historical studies to photographs, which have been modified in interaction with empirical experience in working with historical photographs according to the specifics of the medium.

3) In addition, applicable media-sociological approaches have been developed in the social sciences, as well as methods for more precisely determining the sociological information content of photographs as data sources. [8]

Here, we first discuss the critique of photographic sources from a historiographical perspective. In historical research, a distinction is made between external and internal source criticism. External source criticism is an authenticity check that is carried out on the basis of external characteristics of a source. It is supported by a description of the source, which contains information about the form of the source, its origin and tradition. Internal source criticism, on the other hand, serves to determine the message content and epistemological value of a source. For this purpose, the source is analyzed in terms of how the author depicts a state or an occurrence, what he was able to depict and what he wanted to depict. To determine the value of a historical source, external source criticism is not sufficient; for this purpose, internal source criticism is always required as well. The surest method of determining source value is a comparative analysis of several contemporaneous sources, independent of each other, that report the same event or condition. [9]

1.a. External Source Criticism: Authenticity Verification

Methods for verifying and ensuring the authenticity of historical photographs are particularly important in the case of photographic images of politically controversial event-fields. These accusations usually relate only to individual elements of the photographic image and completely ignore the overall context of the creation and transmission of a photograph. This, however, is of crucial importance in the authentication process. The rejection of photographic information that does not correspond to the prejudice structure of the recipients has also become known within the social sciences. [10] Since in the case of politically controversial historical event-fields and facts, one must expect primarily politically motivated doubts about the authenticity of photographic sources whose content contradicts the political-historical prejudice structure of individual population groups, a careful external source criticism to prove authenticity is the indispensable basis of any further analysis and interpretation of photographic sources.

Proven methods of authenticity testing of historical photographs have been described by Wolf Buchmann [11] and Diethart Kerbs [12]. While Kerbs presents methods related to the material form of transmission and the real history [Realgeschichte] of photography, Buchmann is oriented towards the traditional methods of historical science, which are also used for authenticity testing of written documents. Both methods of source criticism complement each other: while Buchmann deals with general methods of source criticism that can also be applied to photographs, Kerbs deals with methods that relate specifically to the historical modes of production and material forms of transmission of photographic image sources. Buchmann's essay grew out of his work at the Bundesarchiv; it, too, was confronted with accusations of forgery regarding photographs from its own holdings that had been used in the first exhibition of the Hamburg Institute for Social Research on the crimes of the Wehrmacht 1941-1944. [13] In the following, the methods of authenticity testing for historical photographs presented by Wolf Buchmann are briefly described. They form a framework for

the specific photo-historical-realistic methods [14] as presented by Diethart Kerbs. These methods can be used to ensure that the photographs are indeed “genuine” photographs from the period under investigation. Wolf Buchmann distinguishes between two procedures for checking the authenticity of historical documents, which can also be applied to photographs:

- a) the examination of the document itself (shape of the source) and
- b) the examination of the origin of the document (origin and transmission of the source).

It is through the application of these two examination procedures – which together constitute external source criticism – that the authenticity of a historical photographic record can be assured. As has been shown in the course of this investigation, the examination of the gestalt of the photographic source requires special attention in a decidedly photo-scientific and photo-historical approach. Therefore, the examination of the gestalt of the sources is explained here in great detail. The examination of the origin of the document, on the other hand, is only sketched out in outline and presented in the individual chapters in relation to the concrete photographic traditions.

[1] The methods of critiquing photographic sources are presented here in relation to the findings collected in this research.

[2] The actual title of the Hamburg Institute for Social Research exhibition was “Vernichtungskrieg. Die Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941-1944”; see Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, 1996.

[3] The most influential critics of the first exhibition (Bogdan Musial and the magazine “Focus,” cooperating with the Polish weekly “wprost”) substantiated their theses with Polish-language sources and findings of historiographical research in Poland. On the second exhibition, see Hesse 2002 and Arani 2002.

[4] Among the methodological approaches that have been published in historiographical discussion contexts, there is a relatively strong tendency to apply the iconographic-iconological method of interpretation, familiar from art history, to historical photographs of contemporary historical interest (see Jäger 2000, pp. 75f.; cf. for example Berg 1994). Such attempts often amount to interpretations of the meaning of individual pictorial elements of a historical photograph without being able to prove the authenticity of the photograph to outsiders. In these cases, the images are not subjected to any source criticism, as is usual with written sources. This tendency to interpret images without using source-critical methods opens up the possibility of doubting the authenticity of both the photographs and the photographically documented facts and probably also leads to the fact that no general progress in knowledge is achieved with regard to the producers and production methods of the photographs that have been handed down.

[5] Cf. Bartov et al. 2000; among the few professors of history who persistently advance an examination of images is, for example, Gerhard Paul; cf. Paul 2006.

[6] Cf. Sauerländer 1988; also M. Schmidt 1994.

[7] Cf. Sauer 2002; Jäger 2000, pp. 65-88, esp. pp. 72-75 (realienkunde and social-historical consideration); Buchmann 1999; Kerbs 1990, p. 24.

[8] See remarks on visual sociology in the appendix.

[9] Faber/Geiss 1992, pp. 96f.

[10] Cf. Wagner 1979.

[11] Buchmann 1999, pp. 296-306.

[12] Kerbs 1990, pp. 241-262.

[13] Buchmann 1999.

[14] Cf. Jäger 2000.

Excerpt from Chapter III.: National Socialist Press Control [Presselenkung] and Photographic Publicity

From Chapter III.: National Socialist Press Control [Presselenkung] and Photographic Publicity

2. Press photography in the context of Nazi propaganda media in the Reichsgau Wartheland;

a. Photographs as propaganda means and as documentation medium of visual propaganda means; The officially licensed press photographers in the Warthegau [...]

[Excerpt pp. 224-230]

[...] 2. Press Photography in the Context of National Socialist Propaganda Means in the Reichsgau Wartheland

Compared to other areas of photographic application, the special feature of press photographs lies in their journalistic news value, topicality, and a mass communicative duplication. In the media landscape of the time, press photographs were the most up-to-date news images and they were created with the help of an imaging process that was considered objective. [170] Only through their reproduction do press photographs acquire a mass media function and public relevance. An original contemporary paper print can only be in one place; the circle of viewers is limited to a micro-social field. Only mass reproduction catapults a photograph to a macrosocial level of communication and causes the photographic image to penetrate the public sphere and social consciousness. Through mass reproduction, the notoriety of an image expands spatially far beyond the location of the original photographic image (negative and first prints). The purpose of a press photograph is to communicate pictorial news to a wider public.

A decisive intervention by the National Socialist occupying power in the pictorial coverage of the territory of the Reichsgau Wartheland from September 1939 to January 1945 was the exclusion of all Polish press photographers. Poles were completely excluded from the press here, although they formed the majority of the population in this administrative unit. For this reason, no press photographs by Polish authors from the region have survived from the period under study. The exclusion of Polish press photographers did not occur directly, but indirectly through several measures taken by the occupying power in various policy areas.

The photographic stocks examined included contact sheets and enlargements of press photographs and photographs of “German” press photographers from the Reichsgau Wartheland printed in the press. So far, no research has been conducted on the German press photographers in the western Polish territories annexed by the Germans in 1939-1945. In the

empirically collected findings, the press photographs could be narrowed down relatively easily on the basis of external characteristics. As already described in more detail elsewhere, the external characteristics of the press photo prints of the time include, for example, image formats and captions standardized in a certain way. The two largest inventories of press photographs from the Warthegau that have been examined are the partially preserved photographic contact sheets of the NSDAP-Gaupresseamt in Posen [171] and the photographs from the Gau area published in the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* from 1939 to 1945. This chapter outlines the general production conditions of press photographs legally produced under National Socialist rule in relation to the empirical findings collected. It examines the extent to which the photographs are propagandistic or not, and which images of the Germans of themselves and others were conveyed through the press photographs.

The findings from press photographs allow us to say that since the beginning of the war in 1939, all of the pictures – largely independent of the personal political dispositions of the individual press photographers – propagated a consistently positive self-image of the “Germans” and, at the margins, a negative external image of the “Poles. What is of interest here is which production conditions led to this homogenization and how the positive self-image of the “Germans” and the negative foreign image of the “Poles” were shaped in detail.

Even if the German press photographers – as they themselves frequently emphasized – belonged to a professional group that emphasized the “individualism” of the group members, it was possible for the Propaganda Ministry, in conjunction with the state organs and party institutions that exercised violence, to steer the majority of the “German” photojournalists in the desired political direction. On the other hand, it is also known from press history research that during the National Socialist era, individual journalists who personally rejected National Socialist ideology and politics and secretly helped fellow citizens of Jewish origin nevertheless served National Socialist press propaganda with their journalistic products. [172] Such paradoxical constellations must also be considered in the case of press photographers.

So far, it is unclear to what extent political distance from propaganda can be expressed in press photographs. The repressive character of the National Socialist dictatorship must be taken into account, as well as the fact that since the earliest days of mankind, “tyrants” have instilled mortal fear in political dissenters in order to subjugate them in this way. In honor of the few people who nevertheless dared to violently resist a tyrant’s rule, “democrats” for example, erected a stone monument already in ancient Greece. [173] The communication processes within a modern nation-state at the beginning of the 20th century in Poland or Germany are far more complex than in the Greek city-states in the 5th century BCE. For this reason, this study aims to provide as differentiated an understanding as possible of the scope of action of German press photographers under the conditions of National Socialist “tyranny”.

In order to resolve the contradictions that arise between some of the previous explanatory approaches and the empirical findings, it proved useful to distinguish between a micro level of individual cases (individual photographers and individual photographs) and a macro level of National Socialist media policy in its entirety (as a socially dominant framework of action), following sociological approaches to the analysis of complex social networks of relationships

[174] in the analysis of press photography in the National Socialist state. In order to arrive at an adequate understanding of photographic image propaganda in the National Socialist state and to reconstruct the contexts in which the press photographs were created, the overall media policy context and the cross-media National Socialist propaganda steering system must be included in the analysis: National Socialist media policy significantly limited the scope of action of press photographers. When analyzing the various organizational levels at which press photographs were created and distributed, a distinction must be made between the photographers, as producers of the photographic images, and the exploiters of these photographic images (picture editors, publishers, etc.), who were the people primarily responsible for the political line of the printed products during the Nazi dictatorship. The picture editors, publishers and propaganda experts were responsible for the practical implementation of the instructions from the Ministry of Propaganda in Berlin. Indirect censorship and National Socialist propaganda were realized in the interlocking of several state and party institutions and organizational levels at the same time. If one asks which organizations and hierarchical levels were responsible for photographic image propaganda, one encounters procedures based on the division of labor: Functionaries of the propaganda apparatus formulated propaganda goals, which were then realized by the picture agencies or editorial offices with the help of press photographers. Representatives of the propaganda apparatus were involved in the formulation of the captions officially distributed to the newspapers.

Sonntag, den 23. Januar 1944

Ostdeutsche

Geburtstag des Gauleiters

Die besten Wünsche des gesamten Deutschland gelten dem Beauftragten des Führers und seinem Werk

Gauleiter und Reichsstatthalter Arthur Greiser vollendete gestern sein 47. Lebensjahr. Aus diesem Anlaß fanden sich am Vormittag in den Diensträumen des Gauleiters im Deutschen Schloß zu Posen die führenden Männer der Partei und Wehrmacht, der staatlichen und kommunalen Verwaltung, der Wirtschaft und des Kulturlebens ein, um dem Gauleiter ihre herzlichsten Glückwünsche zum Ausdruck zu bringen.

Als erste erschienen die Vertreter der Wehrmacht mit dem Stellv. Kommandierenden General und Befehlshaber im Wehrkreis XXI General der Artillerie Petzel an der Spitze, der dem Gauleiter die besten Wünsche der Wehrmacht überbrachte. Im Namen der vollzählig erschienenen Gauamtsleiter richtete Gaustabsamtsleiter Walther herzliche Glückwunschworte an den Gauleiter und verband damit das Gelöbnis weiterer treuer Gefolgschaft und Mitarbeit aller Parteigenossen des Gau. Ebenso überbrachten die Führer der Gliederungen der NSDAP, der Polizei und der Dienststelle des Reichskommissars für die Festigung des deutschen Volkstums persönlich ihre Glückwünsche. Der Allgemeine Vertreter des Reichsstatthalters, Ministerialdirektor Jäger, erschien mit den Abteilungsleitern seiner Behörde. Ferner waren Gauhauptmann Schulz, die Regierungspräsidenten des Reichsgaues Wartheland, die Leiter der Sonderbehörden und der Oberbürgermeister der Gauhauptstadt an diesem Ehrentage des Gauleiters zugegen.

Zum Abschluß des Empfanges richtete General Petzel eine von tiefer persönlicher Kameradschaft getragene Ansprache an den Gauleiter, in der er sich zum Sprecher aller erschienenen Gäste und darüber hinaus der gesamten deutschen Bevölkerung des Gau. machte und dem Gauleiter als dem Manne in dessen Hände der Führer das Schicksal und die Neugestaltung des Warthelandes gelegt hat, und der in unermüdlicher Arbeit und Zielsicherheit seine geschichtlich bedeutsame Aufgabe meistert, die besten



General Petzel überbringt die Glückwünsche

Aufn.: OB. (Römer)

Wünsche für eine erfolgreiche Weiterführung seines großen Werkes und für sein persönliches Wohlergehen zum Ausdruck brachte.

Der Gauleiter dankte in herzlichen Worten für alle ihm dargebrachten guten Wünsche und hob auch bei dieser Gelegenheit wieder die treue Kameradschaft und gegenseitige Achtung als das vorherrschende Gesetz der gesamten Aufbauarbeit in unserem Gau hervor. Diese Kameradschaft bestimme auch das Verhältnis zwischen Partei und Wehrmacht als den beiden Säulen des nationalsozialistischen Staates.

An seinem Geburtstage gingen dem Gauleiter außerdem von vielen führenden Persönlichkeiten des Reiches, sowie aus allen Teilen unseres Gau. Glückwünsche zu. Sie alle sind ein Zeugnis der Treue und Verehrung, die unserem Gauleiter entgegengebracht wird, und die keinen besseren Ausdruck finden kann, als in dem Willen der Bereitschaft, mit allen Kräften dem Gauleiter bei der Erfüllung der ihm vom Führer übertragenen Aufgaben zu helfen und unter seiner Führung für den deutschen Sieg und die deutsche Zukunft zu arbeiten.

Der Rundfunk am Montag

Deutschlandsender: 17.15 bis 18.30: Konzert der Philharmonie des Generalgouvernements. 20.15 bis 21: „Ich denke dein“, Liebeslieder und Serenaden von Bach, Haydn und Mozart.

Verdunkelung: Von 17.25 bis 7.10 Uhr

Fig. III.39: Ostdeutscher Beobachter [East German Observer] of 23.1.1944, p. 6

The first question is how the National Socialist dictatorship caused a large number of German photojournalists to produce photographic images that could be exploited for the political propaganda of National Socialism. In connection with a sketch of the framework of journalists' activities under the National Socialist dictatorship, the specific production, selection and regional publication contexts of press photographs from the Warthegau are explained in more detail.

2.a. Photographs as a Propaganda Means and as a Documentation Medium of Visual Propaganda Means

In the following, we will speak exclusively of German press photographs that were legally produced at the time. In the empirical findings, these can be quite clearly distinguished from other contemporaneous forms of application of photography due to the aforementioned external characteristics of the primary sources. The term "propaganda photographs" is not used in the present study. [175] As far as can be discerned, this term is usually used in the German-language secondary literature to describe photographs that positively portray a past, non-democratic state and its state ideology by means of a specific choice of motif and mode of depiction in each case. Often, different photographic genres (portraits, press photographs, art reproductions, etc.) are grouped together under the term "propaganda photography," which is characteristic of the ambiguity and ambiguity of the term's usage. The photographs meant by this term have not yet been precisely delimited either thematically, motivationally, or stylistically. The word "propaganda photography" was not used in the period 1939-1945; it describes the political use of photographs in the past from today's point of view. The term propaganda photography combines the means (photography) with the function (propaganda), which should be kept apart to analyze the facts. Moreover, it should be taken into account that photographs can be not only means of propaganda, but also means of documentation of visible means of propaganda.



Fig. III.40: *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* [East German Observer] of 15.2.1942, p. 5

In the scientific German-language secondary literature, press photographs from the period of the National Socialist dictatorship have often been understood as fundamentally ambiguous images of reality, which primarily had a propagandistic function through demagogic captions, but were otherwise free of propaganda. [176] Another approach is to prove the NSDAP membership of individual German press photographers in order to explain the conformity of press photographs with National Socialist ideology. [177] Both approaches proved inadequate with respect to the empirical findings collected in the present study. Only some of the surviving photographs from the Warthegau, taken by “German” professional photographers, can be classified as ambiguous and interpreted propagandistically through image texts. [178]

The attempt to reduce the propagandistic function of National Socialist press picture propaganda to the picture captions or even to identify individual German press photographers as National Socialists did not lead to any generally valid and reliable statements about

German press photographers and the functions of photography in National Socialist press propaganda in particular.



Fig. III.41: *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* [East German Observer], 16.2.1942, p. 3. Photographic illustration for the article “>A auch unsere Frauen helfen siegen<. First special meeting of the “Landfrauen” at the Landesbauerntag in Posen”.

The attempt to reduce the propagandistic function of National Socialist press picture propaganda to the picture captions or even to identify individual German press photographers as National Socialists did not lead to any generally valid and reliable statements about German press photographers and the functions of photography in National Socialist press propaganda in particular.

The thesis of the ambiguous photograph, which is primarily limited in its meaning to a propagandistic statement by the caption, is only partially true. A large number of press photographs in the National Socialist state were published not with demagogic, but with short informative captions about who or what is to be seen in the picture (Fig. III.39). For example, the photograph depicted here, including the surrounding captions, does not show an ambiguous visual fact that is propagandistically charged by the caption: In the foreground of the image, a uniformed man can be seen in the center shaking hands with another uniformed man in the foreground on the right. Even if there were no text attached to the photo, one could figure out by comparing it with other captioned photographs from that time and region that the man in the middle was the military district commander in Posen, General Petzel, and the man on the right was Reichsstatthalter and NSDAP Gauleiter Greiser. One may also assume

that the handshake is a gesture of respectful recognition and mutual solidarity. These facts are not ambiguous.

As with the majority of all photographs, it is not possible in this case, based solely on the visual information provided, to pinpoint with absolute accuracy the time and place, or even the cause, of the symbolic interaction depicted (the mutual handshake). The time, place, and cause of the gesture can be narrowed down with relative accuracy: The visible uniforms were worn only in a certain period of time, the regionally prominent persons can be identified by comparison with other pictures, and the places where the two gentlemen shook hands can also be delimited. The caption of the picture at the time merely adds information to the photograph about the cause of the handshake: General Petzel extends congratulations. The caption of the article provides further information: General brings birthday wishes to the Reichsstatthalter. The propagandistic aspect here lies in the fact that the highest military commander on the ground in Poznan personally delivers his congratulations to the Gauleiter, which emphasizes the extraordinarily high social status of the Reichsstatthalter in the occupying society and symbolically affirms the close ties between the Wehrmacht and the NSDAP. This propaganda message did not emerge from either the photograph or the text alone, but it was created in the context of reception by the German readership at the time.

The following pages show other photo publications that served press propaganda in the Reichsgau Wartheland and for which it is also true that the thesis of the ambiguity of photography and its transformation into propaganda through picture captions does not apply. Nevertheless, these photographs are often propagandistic, since the content of the images can also convey propaganda messages (Figs. III.40-III.43).



Fig. III.42: Ostdeutscher Beobachter [East German Observer], 12.1.1943, p. 3: Photographic illustration for the article „Vorkämpfer für Großdeutschlands Sendung. On the 50th Birthday of Reichsleiter and Reichsminister Alfred Rosenberg”.

Winfried Ranke attempted to define the propagandistic in the photographs of the propaganda companies of the German Wehrmacht more precisely in order to distinguish it from the non-propagandistic in the photographs. Apart from the image texts guiding interpretation, he also cited external features of original contemporary press photo prints as a distinguishing criterion: Only press photo prints that show the corresponding release stamps of the censorship offices on the back would be undoubtedly propaganda. [179]

The problem posed by this external distinguishing feature, which according to Ranke is reliable, is its comparatively rare occurrence: As a rule, the image holdings examined did not contain contemporary master prints of the agencies with censorship notices, but rather other contemporary uses of press image prints. Of the propaganda companies, the Federal Archives have preserved predominantly photographic images in the form of (contact-copied) negative film strips without any labeling. This means that this extraordinarily large stock of photographs cannot be differentiated into propagandistic and non-propagandistic on the basis of the external criterion cited by Ranke, since the decisive feature is not part of the primary source. However, it is fundamentally indisputable that the producer of these photographic images – the “Propaganda Companies” (PK) – had a propagandistic intention.

If one tried to apply Ranke’s external criterion of distinction to all surviving PK photographs, one would arrive at the quite bizarre result that of more than a million PK photographs, perhaps only a dozen could be undoubtedly described as propaganda. Thus, orientation on this single criterion is insufficient and does not lead to reliable results. Propagandistic can also be the image contents and photographic presentation methods of the image object, if they are in accordance with the specifications of the Ministry of Propaganda, or if they were published in the legal press of the Nazi state. It may be assumed that the majority of legal photographic publications complied with both the censorship regulations and the instructions of the Ministry of Propaganda. Photography was a propaganda medium alongside and in conjunction with other propaganda media. Single-image analyses do not provide sufficient insights into such synaesthetic phenomena in the National Socialist ‘media network’. [180]



Fig. III.43: *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* [East German Observer], 24.1.1944, p. 1. Photographic illustration for the article „Kämpfendes Volkstum sichert den Lebensraum. Gauleiter Greiser und SS-Obergruppenführer Lorenz sprachen zum Abschluß der Reichstagung des VDA.“

The officially authorized press photographers in the Warthegau

In the territory of the Reichsgau Wartheland, with a focus on the Posener Land, it was possible to establish the activity of various press photographers. In addition, the press offices of various state and party official organizations also distributed photographic images to the press, whose photographers were not named in the press copyright notices. [181] Individual press photographers traveled through the Warthegau on behalf of organizations in the Reich territory (for example, Hilmar Pabel, Liselotte Purper, Boris Spahn). The stay of individual PK photographers in the Warthegau is also documented (Wiesemann, Zermín). [182] Apart from the PK photographers who worked in Wehrmacht uniforms, the activities of various “German” press photographers in civilian working contexts could be proven:

- freelance press photographers who traveled through the Warthegau (Fritz Halleger, Liselotte Purper, Boris Spahn)
- permanently employed professional and press photographers (Nikolai Bogner, Willy Römer, Gerhardt Wolbrandt)

– journalists of the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter*, who occasionally also took photographs (especially in local reporting from the small towns of the Gau: Eugen Petrull, Fritz Albrich, Heinz Urban)

– German amateurs (Ernst Stewner) and part-time photographers (Wilhelm Holtfreter, Alfred Kiss, Waldemar Rode) [183].

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[170] Equally true-to-life and, moreover, moving technical news pictures were provided by the film newsreels, but since they changed only on a weekly basis, they had less topical value than the press photographs in the daily press.

[171] Part of the stock is in the West Institute (Instytut Zachodni), another part in the Museum of the City of Poznan. See also the list of surviving contact sheets of the NSDAP-Gaupresseamt Posen in the appendix.

[172] One of the best-known individual cases is the journalist Ruth Andreas-Friedrich; see Frei/Schmitz 1989, pp. 73, 82, 121, 132.

[173] In Athens in the 5th century B.C. there was a famous bronze statue group of the tyrannicide Harmodius and Aristogeiton, which can be seen today in the form of a Roman marble copy in Naples. The represented had fought the tyranny of the Peisistratids and murdered one of them, Hipparchus, during the Great Panathenaea. Harmodius was killed by the bodyguard of the Peisistratids, Aristogeiton was tortured and executed. The monument in memory of them – created by the sculptor Antenor after the expulsion of the Peisistratids in 510 BCE – was of extraordinary importance for the subsequently developing, time-specific “democratic” self-image (slavery!) of the Greek city-state in the 5th century BCE. In antiquity, the Greek city-states were repeatedly invaded by the Persians, who at that time were a world power like the United States of America today. The Persians at that time desecrated the temples of the Greeks, toppled their statues and stole valuable bronze statues, among them in 480 B.C. the bronze statue group of the tyrant murderers. In 447 B.C., the artists Kritios and Nesiotes created a new statue of the Tyrannicide as a pictorial expression of their Athenian “struggle for freedom” and political self-image. This statue group is so famous that one can find some sentences about it in every relevant handbook on classical archaeology (“Strict style”). Tyranny was a form of rule that occurred intermittently in the Greek city-states at the time, pushing back the rule of the nobility and favoring the very heterogeneous urban population of Athens in comparison. Due to the greed for power and extravagance of the tyrants, it was not a form of government that was stable in the long term.

[174] See, for example, Aulinger 1992, p. 139f.; Wössner 1986, p. 163. Macrosociology examines the systems of action that govern society, in contrast to microsociology, which examines interpersonal relationships between individuals.

[175] See, for example, Sauer 2002, pp. 591f.; Jäger 2000, pp. 113-122; Sachsse 1982, p. 62; Diskussionsprotokoll AG NS-Propagandafotografie 1982, pp. 74f.

[176] See, for example, Ranke 1992. Winfried Ranke argued that propaganda began with the captioning of pictures. He writes that photographs were never used solely as a means of propaganda: The decisive factor for their propagandistic use was their subsequent captioning, and the captioning determined the interpretation of the image (pp. 64 and 72). Cf. also the completely uncritical – or better: naive – understanding of photographic image sources in EdN p. 340; here all photographs from the time of the National Socialist dictatorship are presented as “image sources” without any reference to the original propagandistic purposes of the photographic source groups mentioned.

[177] See also Ranke 1992 and the published directories of photographers by Rolf Sachsse, who has dealt very intensively with the identification of NSDAP memberships of German professional photographers – although he did not identify as such one of the most efficient suppliers of photographs for the National Socialist “Greuelpropaganda” (“atrocities propaganda”) of the war period – Karlheinz Fremke; cf. on this list of photographers here in the appendix under “Fremke” and the chapter on the “Bromberger Blutsonntag”.

[178] See in particular the examples of images discussed in the chapter “Institutional Producers of Photographs” in the section on the Deutsches Ausland-Institut.

[179] Ranke 1992, p. 62, 67.

[180] It seemed methodologically more sensible to typologize the multitude of themes and modes of representation as far as possible in order to do justice to the quantity of the surviving pictorial material. Within the given framework, it was not possible to compile a list of the particularly frequent pictorial themes and modes of representation of the contemporary press photo paper prints, because the density of their transmission with motifs from the Warthegau was too low in the sifted holdings.

[181] On the author’s notes, Sachsse 2003, Doc. 4.48. Most party organizations, business enterprises, and some state agencies had press departments that regulated the procurement and dissemination of journalistic information in the spirit of their organization. For example, Dr. Heinrich Bosse, a Baltic German who had initially worked in Posen in the press office of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, was “detached” to the Higher SS and Police Leader in Posen as a press officer on February 1, 1940, and worked there in the office of SS-Oberführer Döring. See APP-VoMi-Sign. 145, Bl. 25; APP-VoMi-Sign. 148, Bl. 16, 22, 173; Fielitz 2000, p. 371.

[182] Cf. list of photographers in the appendix under “Purper” and “Spahn” and chapter “Institutional Photography” on the propaganda companies.

[183] The photo publications in the daily Ostdeutscher Beobachter from the region also confirm for the Warthegau that local photo reporting in the province was a sideline field of craft photographers and amateurs; see Herz 1994, p. 355 note 110.

Excerpts from Chapter IV.: The Change of the Production Conditions of Photographs for Poles through the Occupation Policy in the Territory of the Reichsgau Wartheland 1939-1945

The entire economic order in the newly formed Reichsgau Wartheland was “restructured” under National Socialist occupation rule from the end of 1939 to the effect that not only Polish state assets but also the private assets of Poles (including Jewish Poles) were confiscated by the Haupttreuhandstelle Ost (HTO), which was created for this purpose, and then transferred to the National Socialist “Volksgemeinschaft”.

Excerpts from Chapter IV.: The Change of the Production Conditions of Photographs for Poles through the Occupation Policy in the Territory of the Reichsgau Wartheland 1939-1945

2. changes in the photographic industry of the newly formed Reichsgau Wartheland: the expropriation of Polish business owners since the end of 1939 [...]

3. the ban on the possession and use of cameras by all Poles, “enemy aliens” and “Jews” in the Reichsgau Wartheland from 1941; a. the confiscated cameras of Poles in the Schrimm (Srem) district [...]

[Excerpt pp. 436-438 and 440-441]

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From Chapter IV.: The Changes in the Conditions of Production of Photographs for Poles by the Occupation Policy in the Reichsgau Wartheland 1939-1945

2. Changes in the photographic industry of the newly formed Reichsgau Wartheland: the expropriation of Polish business owners since autumn 1939

[Excerpt: pp. 436-438]

Within the general framework of Poland policies, which had been presented comprehensively for the first time in the November 1939 memorandum of the NSDAP’s Office of Racial Policy, Poles were successively excluded from photographic production in the Reichsgau

Wartheland by the National Socialist occupying power in the following years. The German occupation administration increasingly denied them access to the means of photographic production. After all Poles in the Reichsgau Wartheland were initially excluded from the press and publishing professions, something similar happened some time later in the photographic crafts and trades. Finally, Poles were eventually forbidden, under threat of punishment, to privately own and use cameras. This gradual process of excluding Poles from photographic production in the Reichsgau Wartheland finds its parallels in other measures taken by the National Socialist occupying power, all of which aimed to exclude the Polish population from participation in cultural life and modern means of communication. In specialist literature, this was also referred to as an attempt of a “de-culturalization” of the Poles.

The entire economic order in the newly formed Reichsgau Wartheland was “restructured” under National Socialist occupation rule from the end of 1939 to the effect that not only Polish state assets but also the private assets of Poles (including Jewish Poles) were confiscated by the Haupttreuhandstelle Ost (HTO), which was created for this purpose, and then transferred to the National Socialist “Volksgemeinschaft”. [28] The HTO had been established by Hermann Göring in mid-October to November 1, 1939, and was headed by Max Winkler. A regional branch of the trusteeship office was established in Posen in December 1939, followed in 1940 by another branch in Lodz. These offices recorded the commercial and industrial assets of Polish citizens in the Warthegau and carried out their confiscation and directed its further utilization. For the forced confiscation of Polish assets, the HTO had at its disposal the police and the SS. The HTO confiscated businesses, valued them, and then sold them to Germans or handed them over to German trustees for provisional administration. In this way, it regulated the competition for the most economically interesting objects among the Germans and gave the appearance to the outside world that the state-organized looting of Polish property, which was not permissible under international law, was a legitimate act of state. [29]

In order to regulate the confiscation of Polish state and private property in a pseudo-legal manner, the National Socialist occupying power in the Reichsgau Wartheland issued a whole series of fundamental decrees in 1940. [30] The “Polish Property Ordinance” [“Polenvermögensordnung”] of 17.9.1940 generally confiscated all commercial and private property of Polish citizens in favor of the German Reich; the HTO was to dispose about commercial assets and municipal land from Polish ownership. [31]



Fig. IV.01: NSDAP-Gaupresseamt Posen, „Q – Wirtschaft. Sitzung der Haupttreuhandstelle-Ost, Abteilung Handel, Handwerk“ Posen, ca. 1940/41 (IZ NSDAP-Gaupresseamt Arch. Nr. Q 6, 4th film strip, negative 11).

The Polish businesses that were gradually confiscated were assigned to the economic groups of the newly formed Gauwirtschaftskammer Wartheland. When the HTO auditors judged a property to be productive, it was transferred to German companies or individual entrepreneurs in provisional administration, in trusteeship, or by sale. Since within the HTO economic objectives were linked to population policy and military objectives, not only the newly founded Chamber of Crafts and Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Wartheland, but also RKF and Wehrmacht services participated in the selection of applicants. By 1942, the registration and transfer of ownership of Polish business enterprises was almost complete. [32]

The resale of the confiscated Polish farms to German buyers was mediated according to certain distribution keys, according to which certain groups of Germans were to be preferred

as buyers. For this reason, the HTO's documents also recorded whether the prospective buyer was a "Reichdeutscher", a "Volksdeutscher" (i.e., a Polish-German), a "Baltic German", or the like. A "General Referent for the Consolidation of German Nationality" [Generalreferent für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums] (GVSS) determined which groups were to be given preferential treatment in economic life in order to "consolidate German nationality" [einer "Festigung deutschen Volkstums"] and demanded, for example, of the Posen Trust Office that "ethnic Germans and resettlers, insofar as they come into question as applicants for purchase, should be admitted as quickly as possible" to the companies – "subject to verification of their political harmlessness". [33]

All this also applied to the Polish photographic businesses located in Poznan, Lodz and the small towns of the Warthegau. At that time, drugstores often already carried out photographic work, which was now, of course, also taken away from the Polish owners and transferred to new German administrators or owners in the form described above. As a rule, when businesses were transferred from Polish to German owners, the largest and most lucrative businesses were first confiscated and handed over to Germans. Especially in the center of the city of Poznan, the transfer of photographic businesses took place quite quickly, which was also related to the fact that numerous Baltic Germans had already settled here at the end of 1939, to whom the formerly Polish businesses were now handed over. It is very likely that many of the Polish owners of photo studios and photo shops in the center of Poznan were among those who were first resettled in the General Government by the German occupying power, since the city center in particular was to be populated with Germans as quickly as possible. The lives of the numerous Polish and German photographers can hardly be reconstructed, but the systematic transfer of Polish photographic businesses to Germans in the city of Poznan can be traced on the basis of contemporary telephone directories, advertisements, photographic sources with proof of authorship, and preserved administrative files.

[...]

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[28] With the exception of agricultural property, which was confiscated by the RKF services.

[29] See especially Rosenkötter 2002; also Aly/Heim 1991, p. 155 Röhr 1989, pp. 41f., 47f. and Doc. 24, p. 132f.; Serwanski 1970, pp. 156f., 159; Luczak 1969a; Luczak 1966, pp. 197-204; Deresiewicz 1950.

[30] Serwanski 1970, pp. 157f.; Pospieszalski 1952, pp. 215, 221f., 226f.; Deresiewicz 1950, pp. 29f., 33f. 65f. It concerns the decree of 15.1.1940 (Polish state property), the decree of 12.2.1940 (state management of agricultural land by the Ostland Company [Gesellschaft Ostland]), and the decree of 17.9.1940 (private property of Polish citizens).

[31] Reichsgesetzblatt I, p. 1270; see also Broszat 1965, p. 127. Agricultural property was confiscated for the disposal by the RKF.

[32] Röhr 1989, pp. 41f.; Aly/Heim 1991, pp. 155, 165.

[33] See APP-Haupttreuhandstelle Ost, Sign. 8798, Bl. 15.

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The process of successive expropriation of all Polish photographic businesses, which had been going on in the newly formed Gau in the East since the end of 1939, reached a new climax in the summer of 1941 in the form of a police order prohibiting all Poles in the Gau from owning and using cameras.

From Chapter IV: The Change of the Conditions of Production of Photographs for Poles by the Occupation Policy in the Reichsgau Wartheland 1939-1945

3. The ban on the possession and use of photographic equipment for Poles, enemy aliens and Jews in the Reichsgau Wartheland as of 1941

[Excerpt pp. 440-441]

The process of successive expropriation of all Polish photographic businesses, which had been going on in the newly formed Gau in the East since the end of 1939, reached a new climax in the summer of 1941 in the form of a police order prohibiting all Poles in the Gau from owning and using cameras. [39] A few fragments of documents concerning the police order for the Poznan administrative district in 1941 have been preserved, which provide some insight into the implementation of this ban on photography for Poles: On June 26, 1941, the president of the Poznan administrative district, Viktor Böttcher, apparently issued the first order that Poles in the administrative district must hand over their cameras and binoculars to the German occupation authorities. [40] On June 28, 1941, he sent a quick letter to the police chief in Posen, to the district councils of the administrative district, the gendarmerie, and the district commissioners concerning the “submission of Polish-owned cameras and binoculars.” He informed them that a “police order on the possession of cameras and binoculars” would soon appear in the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter*, according to which “Poles, enemy aliens and stateless persons” were prohibited from possessing these objects. The police order was to be publicly announced to the population immediately “by public notice”. The cameras had to be delivered by the Poles to the district commissars or gendarmerie posts and in Posen to the police stations by July 7. [41] On the following Sunday, June 29, 1941, the German police in

Seewörth (Strzeszynek) in the Posen district conducted a search of all the Poles gathered at the lake there, taking away their cameras. [42]

On July 1, 1941, Viktor Böttcher, the District President of Poznan, again sent a quick letter to the Chief of Police in Poznan, the District Administrators, the Gendarmerie and the District Commissioners. He informed them that the issuance of the police decree would be postponed for a week and that a report on the execution of the decree was to be made by August 1, 1941. He also urged the addressees to “take care that the cameras as well as the binoculars are delivered in perfect condition. If there is any suspicion that the Polish owner has deliberately rendered them unusable, the Gestapo is to be asked for further measures”. [43] Finally, on July 7, 1941, the police order issued on July 4, 1941, appeared in the Ostdeutscher Beobachter. [44] It stated:

“Police Order – on the possession of photo cameras and binoculars. On the basis of § 6 of the Second Regulation for the Implementation of the Decree of the Fuehrer and Reich Chancellor on the Division and Administration of the Incorporated Eastern Territories of November 2, 1939 (RGBl. I, p. 2133), the following is ordered for the administrative district of Posen:

§ 1. The possession of photographic equipment and binoculars is forbidden to Poles and enemy aliens.

§ 2. The persons mentioned in § 1 shall deliver the photographic apparatus and binoculars in their possession to the local police station (gendarmerie post, district commissars), in the city of Poznan to the police stations, not later than 5 p.m. on July 12, 1941.

§ 3. The sale of films, photographic equipment and binoculars to the persons mentioned in § 1 is prohibited. In case of violation, the buyer and the seller shall be liable to prosecution.

§ 4. violations of the police regulation shall be punished by RM 150 or imprisonment, unless higher penalties or other measures are applied.

§ 5. The Police Regulations shall come into force immediately. Posen, July 4, 1941, the District President.”

As early as July 8, 1941, the district commissioner from Schrimm (Srem) wrote to the district president in Posen to describe the problem that would arise if all Poles had to hand over their cameras: There was no German professional photographer in Schrimm, but only the Polish professional photographer Piasecki, who had a studio and film apparatus. If the Polish photographer had to hand over his studio equipment, the German “Volksgenossen” would be forced to travel all the way to Posen to take photographs, which would take a lot of time. [45] In Moschin (Mosina) the same conditions would prevail: “In the whole Schrimm district there is not one German professional photographer. If the apparatus of the Polish photographers were confiscated, not one photograph could be produced in the whole district.” [46] Thus, the responsible district commissioner in the Tiefenbach (Ksiaz) district of Schrimm County also left the Polish professional photographers their cameras, since no German professional photographers were resident. [47]

Different conditions prevailed in the district of Grätz (Grodzisk). On August 13, 1941, the district administrator there reported to the district president in Posen on the enforcement of the police order: "Polish professional photographers and photo stores have not been allowed to keep their equipment. The apparatuses already delivered have been taken into custody here under lock and key." [48]

As a result of the public requests, Poles in both counties delivered cameras to the German authorities concerned.

[...]

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[39] Cf. Luczak 1990, pp. 284f., Majer 1981, pp. 415f., 452f.; DO XIII, Doc. VIII-3, pp. 284f. (police order banning photographic equipment for Poles, Regierungspräsident Litzmannstadt 28.6.1941).

[40] Luczak 1989, p. 247.

[41] APP-Landrat Schrimm, Sign. 73, Bl. 234.

[42] Luczak 1989, p. 249.

[43] APP-Landrat Grätz, Sign. 22, Bl. 31.

[44] „Ostdeutscher Beobachter“, 7/7/1941, p. 4, section „Amtliche Bekanntmachungen.“ Cf. APP-Landrat Grätz, Sign. 22, Bl. 33 (quick letter from the Regierungspräsident of Posen, Viktor Böttcher, to the Polizeipräsident of Posen, the Landräte of the Regierungsbezirk, the Gendarmerie, and the Amtskommissare of 5.7.1941: the Regierungspräsident informs that the police order cited in the circulars of 26.6. and 1.7.1941 will appear in the Ostdeutscher Beobachter on 7.7.1941).

[45] APP-Landrat Schrimm, Sign. 73, Bl. 262.

[46] APP-Landrat Schrimm, Sign. 73, Bl. 263.

[47] APP-Landrat Schrimm, Sign. 73, Bl. 251 (letter from the Amtskommissar vom Bezirk Tiefenbach (Ksiaz) to the Landrat in Schrimm dated 28.7.1941).

[48] APP-Landrat Grätz, Sign. 40.

About the author

Miriam Yegane Arani did her doctorate at the UDK in Berlin under the supervision of the photo historian Prof. Diethart Kerbs. Her work focuses on the survey and analysis of photo-historical materials from the NS period. Her dissertation dealt with the Reichsgau Wartheland, where the Nazis implemented “exemplary” oppressive measures against the native Polish population. Similar methods were soon to be used in the old Reich territories in an increased dimension against the antagonized parts of the German, especially the German Jewish population. In the “Reichsgau Wartheland”, a German administrative unit newly formed from previously Polish territories after the military occupation, the Nazi regime realized its population and settlement policy plans for Eastern Europe in an exemplary manner.

Tierautonomie

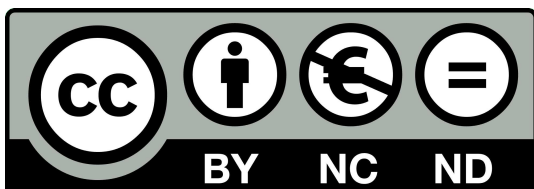
Publisher: www.simorgh.de – ‘Society, conflict and the anthropogenic dilemma’. Revised 01/2023. This reader is published in context with the memorial fund dedicated to Miriam’s work by the Edition Farangis.

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8 Questions – that we asked Can Başkent about the interfaces of Atheism and Animal Rights

Background:

We have conducted this interview with Can in 2014 for our third German issue of Tierautonomie: *Tierbefreiung, Atheismus und Widerstand* [Animal Liberation, Atheism and Resistance], Jg. 1 (2014), Heft 3 > <https://d-nb.info/1210797186/34>] in context with the environmental protests of the Gezi movement (with the apex of their protests in 2013). Segments of the Turkish vegan, animal rights and animal liberation movement/s were at the forefront of the protests, and the tension between religious conservative politics with the progressive secular left (and with them the anarchist groups) became imminent.

Tags: Can Başkent, animal rights, animal sociology, philosophy, atheism, Turkey, religion

About our interview partner

Can Başkent was born in Istanbul, Turkey. He studied math and philosophy as an undergraduate, received his masters degree in logic in Amsterdam and his doctorate in computer science in New York. He continued his academic path at the Sorbonne and the École Normale Supérieure in philosophy and worked at the French Institute for Research in Computer Science and Automation (INRIA) as a researcher. As an activist Can has published a wide range of texts on anarchism, atheism, veganism and animal rights, he's been engaged with the "Food not Bombs" campaign and launched a campaign to support the vegan prisoner of consciousness Osman Evcan. In 2011 Can founded the "Propaganda Press" (<http://propagandayayinlari.net/>), in 2013 he co-authored together with the vegan journalist Zülâl Kalkandelen (<http://www.veganlogic.net/>) the first enchiridion in Turkish about the political and economic aspects of ethical veganism: "Veganizm: Ahlakı, Siyaseti ve Mücadelesi" (Veganism: its Ethics, Politics and Struggle: <http://propagandayayinlari.net/vegan.html>). Can is a Senior Lecturer in computer science at Middlesex University, London. Can's website is at <http://canbaskent.net/>.

(The interviewer [Palang] noting in 2023 for the reader: In retrospect I am excusing the length of my questions with the relative 'newness' of the matters discussed here – as the human/animal- and animal/human-question is being declinated with other strains of thought than the usual anthro-hegemonical ones. I felt I have to highlight dimensions in some detail for clarification and for not risking that definitions fall into any unhelpful regressive paradigms.)

8 Questions – that we asked Can Başkent about the interfaces of Atheism and Animal Rights

We have asked computer scientist and vegan author and publisher Can Başkent about the visible and the invisible forms of violence against nonhuman animals and the environment carried out in religious contexts, and if an ethical veganism should entail a rejection of a top-down hierarchical view on the evolution and existence.

"Tell me, did you think it was easy to be an atheist in this country, with the main problem being that offending the religious sentiments of others has been branded as a 'crime'?"

Ramazan'da Ateizm / Ramadan atheism,

<http://www.canbaskent.net/politika/86.html>

"Today religious discrimination is recognized as a violation of human rights. While it has been forgotten that religion is itself is a violation of human rights."

Bir Devrimcilik Olarak Ateizm / Reformist atheism,

<http://www.canbaskent.net/politika/85.html>

Can: I've always thought that people panic for no reason in Turkey. As an atheist, I had no real difficulty or a problem except from receiving some ridiculous threat emails. The thing in Turkey is that such law is applied only to those people who are very popular. Unless you are on TV every now and then, be on newspapers all the time, prosecution does not care if a regular random citizen violates the law or not. So, it is safer than it looks, and we should not hide behind the fear of law.

1. Witnessing an act of killing

Palang: In your text 'The Festival of the Sacrificed' (Kurban'in Bayrami, <http://www.canbaskent.net/vegan/19.html>) you question why an argument of cognitive dissonance in a human being, who does not want to become aware of his/her own cruelty, (because he/she does have to become aware of it), could not be fully applied in the case of public animal sacrifices, so that the notion: 'if slaughterhouses had glass walls, people would go vegetarian', seems to be wrong at the annual Feast of Sacrifices for example. It seems there is a social acceptance for an outlived and visible brutality to Nonhumans when such an event represents a tradition within the context of a religious praxis.

In the secular West the visibility of the kind of speciesism that is going along with the "killing for 'meat'" (specifically) is a modified one: killing itself tends to stay mostly or partly invisible, being delegated to be carried out by others. Yet in a mass event of a ritual killing in the name of a religion, the same callousness: *Animal = Meat* and *Animal = Sacrifice* is directly visible for anybody, if he/she wants to see it or not. And if someone is willing to partake in the act, he/she can do so and kill a nonhuman on the street. These events have a strong public visibility and count as tied to specifically religiously colored traditions.

Some people argue that it would be more honest if everybody would have to witness the killing of nonhumans. Is the killing of nonhumans, when it is sanctioned if not encouraged by a religion still the more *basic* act of speciesism, as being something deeply engrained in our society, while the killing of nonhuman animals for generating "meat" carried out mostly by the butchers or in a slaughterhouse represents a *modernism of speciesism*, which needs to be deciphered in different terms?

Can: First of all, I never thought that the reason why most people are not vegan is epistemological. It is not because people do not know or are not aware that what they eat/kill is sentient animals. You know, real psychopaths kill their victims physically facing them. Eating those animals, which is beyond hunting for instance, is a similar act. It is more violent, more "manly".

Clearly, the religion simply reflects this dictum. As there is no god, as the religions were not really sent by a so-called-god, the "holy" texts simply reflect the dominant paradigm.

I have never thought that prioritizing different reflections and practices of speciesism can be a useful idea. However, as they are different reflections, they must be fought against in different terms.

Here is another piece of thought. Understanding the religious practices, the fear behind them, the neediness that established them are important steps in really comprehending as to why people really engage in such horrible acts. You cannot dissolve such crimes without crashing the ideal of “heaven”, fear from unpredictable, etc. So, there is a “humane” and “social” reason as to why it is rational why people sacrifice (young girls, animals, etc.) under these assumptions. So, as long as you cannot smash these assumptions, the rest cannot follow.

2. Coming to terms with entrenched positions?

Palang: Ethical vegetarianism can look back on a long history and tradition, dating back before the big monotheistic religions (Islam, Christianity and Judaism). Yet, it's these religions that take a leading role in our discourse today about the *ethics of life and moral behaviour*.

The *ethical critique against the general society* (in the secular sense) phrased by vegan Animal Rights proponents is normally met with different grades of either dismissal and rejection (speciesism) or a relative open-mindedness and willingness to reconsider the questions about the dramatically problematic constitution of society in regards to nonhumans and the natural environment.

With religious belief-systems it seems we only can expect an opening for fundamentally new conceptions to a lesser degree, since their dogmas and principles have already been fixed in their goals in the historical past of the religion – and this would also include the evaluation of life and the determination of hierarchies of beings/existence: fauna, flora and the earth overall stand below God and below the human and will have to be either protected or tyrannized. Also, *religious practices and traditions* (apart from the dogma) bind the believer to the belief-system, and often imply a view on animals and nature as objects that must be dominated, and that “Man” can handle with benevolence but also with ignorance, without having to fear any further social reproach.

Religions don't list the destructivity towards our fellow beings and the environment as a top sin, but claim an entitlement of their positions as moral instances and ethical signposts in every question of life. Can this claim of the big world religions, to be able to hand out ethical answers about the entire purpose and meaning of life, be authoritative and/or helpful at all, in times in which society increasingly develops a sensitivity towards the questions of animal- and environmental ethics?

And, to what extent do we have to allow religiously driven positions to access and shape our own ethical debate? Equally: to what extent can we, as Animal Right proponents, simply dismiss them as mainly anthropocentric positions?

Can: Pragmatically, who can deny the dominance of religious vegetarianism in India? As you can see, sometimes religions provide some pragmatical benefit, but it is, in the case of Hinduism, entirely coincidental. However, the real problem with people avoiding killing animals for religious reasons, is simply because it is a limited point of view. Yet, most people, religious or not, have limited point of views in life. What I mean is if we politically ignore or refuse the religion as a sociological fact, we risk losing the majority in our political struggle. A revolutionary political struggle can have one of its foot on reality while keeping the other on the future.

Religion is a social phenomenon enabling ruling people. It has an economical side as well as a “moral” side. Thus, it is not difficult to see that the moral code helps the clergy to gain economical (sexual, governmental, etc.) benefits. Thus, we cannot even call it an honest morality. Politically, there must be a balance, I have to grant. If most people are somewhat believers, and if those people are your target in the animal liberation movements, you have to formulate anti-religious perspectives delicately and directly. This is more or less an art.

After all, in the animal liberation movement, people like you are not my targets, as you are already there. What I am trying to change is the people who eat sausages every day and go to church every week. If I annoy them, it means that more animals will die due to my arrogance and wrong strategy. This is a cost I am not willing to take.

3. Is the apex of existence where “Man” is?

Palang: Animal Rights and the protection of natural spaces and habitats for all living beings make up other *political, social and moral goals* than the goals that the main big religions pursuit, which hold men, being made in the “image of God”, at center-stage. Contrary to this, our non- anthropocentric and anti-speciesist resistance movements phrase new questions about ‘hierarchies-of-being’. Is the *questioning of the ‘hierarchies-of-being’* – namely that man can’t dominate the world acting as a “crown of the creation” – a necessary paradigm shift in our thinking, or would it be enough for humans to just pledge to take more responsibility for their co-world and fellow beings, even if that would still just take place with that sense of anthropocentric hubris?

Can: Perhaps now it is a good time to underline that an anthropocentric approach is not an evil in itself. After all veganism is also anthropocentric. People / anthro does not have to be an evil. Thus, it is neither philosophically nor practically useful for us to think or act as non-humans. We have to be humans to be vegan, in other words (forcing your pets to be vegan does not count, for obvious reasons). That said, I believe in a variety in such movements: some people can be more people oriented, some can be more animal/ecology oriented, which

is fine. This is [also] relevant to a broader and perhaps more heterodox understanding of god. This is a delicate issue.

If people come up with a harmless notion of god, what would I think? In my opinion, harm is not the only evil associated with god, and removing the harm element does not immediately make it alright. But, in practice, it can help humans and non-human animals. As I said before, we have to be alert when it risks losing animals for political correctness.

I hope you can see the paradox here: animal rights activists sometimes (indirectly) sacrifice animals too, for political correctness. This is an important point to consider.

4. Borders / Barriers?

Palang: Religions speak of the indirect duties that we have towards nonhumans and the environment as the compassion and reverence that we ought to have with Gods other creation, and this would count as a human virtue that is favored by God. In the animal liberation movement we form equations that describe nonhumans and the environment in their independent and autonomous dignity, we seek to describe them in their own value, and in this way, we postulate different foundations that serve their protection and their defence.

If we confront the animal advocacy- and the environmental movements (as non-anthropocentric ethical frameworks) specifically with the religious belief-systems, as two different social epistemologies that are defining ethics, does the *departure from anthropocentrism* (the demand of the Animal Rights and parts of the environmental movement) *contain a potential of conflict* at the moment in which religion (as an anthropocentric framework) takes up a larger space within a society?

In other words: Does religious dogma and authoritarian aspiration (as aspects of religious belief-systems), create restrictions when it comes to the ethical debates that consider anthropocentrism as a barrier in ethical thinking?

Can: No. First of all, the religious philosophy is a very rich and broad field. There are so many great minds who spent their lives writing amazing treatises trying morality with religion.

Averroes and Abelard are the first mind coming to my mind. Religion is more complex than what most atheists think, it had many many more great minds than what most atheists think as well. Of course, not every believer is like Abelard (one wishes that), but religious morality can create a crazy and very smart philosophy, and it did.

Of course, in practice, 99.9% of believers consider religious dogma as a framework of restrictions and taboos. In such a world, rational reasoning becomes impossible.

5. A duty to protest?

Palang: Can we presuppose a *fundamental moral right* to create our own spaces for perspectives in freethinking, in which nonhuman animals and the environment are included into the *ethical center*, even if this puts us into an antagonist position in particular to strongly religious people and religious communities?

And going a bit further: Can such a freedom in thinking about the human-animal and the human-environmental-relation, exclude us from a “societal contractualism”?

Can: No. Any presupposition in morality can lead to an authoritarianism. If you look at all fascist and dogmatic moralities, you can always find such an essentialist point: they may assume people are evil, or in contrast, they assume people are good in spirit. Clearly, this makes the philosophy easier to construct and digest, but, it simply adds yet another metaphysical assumption to the moral philosophy and risks essentialism. Human and non-human contractualism is a very dangerous field in my opinion, which takes veganism beyond its realistic boundaries and reconstructs it, well, religiously. Namely, I advocate an empiric, dynamic and interactive morality that does not need a foundational assumption or right, that includes the right to live.

6. If there is no golden mean?

Palang: If both: religion and animal liberation could be connected in specific points, would we not have to worry that Animal Rights/Liberation and environmental protection again would *only have to be contingent/conditional ethical concerns*, and that through making compromises or through the combination of animal rights ethics and anthropocentric religion, we would again miss out on the desired fundamental shift in thinking?

In other words: Is it a legitimate fear that in a society, that is ethically and morally strongly influenced by religion, no really new and just perspectives and politics “beyond Homo sapiens” can be evolved?

And connected to this: Does a strongly *biologically* assigned field (that is: all the subjects that evolve around nonhuman animals and their natural habitat/the environment) even require a fundamental shift in its ethical, social and political variables?

Can: Well, evolution is a continuous phenomenon. I cannot imagine how the animal liberation movement will be in a hundred years. Even in the past century, we have read an insane amount of good and original ideas supplemented with exciting revolutionary practices. I don’t see any reason why we would consume all future possibilities.

7. A utopia?

Palang: Could an anthropocentric religion be stretched and modified so far in its interpretation, that for example, the human alone wouldn't have a privilege of being an "image of God", but that instead the entire world would represent a value that needs to be equally merited with the highest respect and reverence? Would religion even be able to maintain its own meaning, in their ability to create a form of exclusive or/and exceptional identity, if it didn't have these *hierarchical* views on worldly existence?

Can: Of course. Many different interpretation of each major religion (including Islam and Buddhism) has this taste. Heterodox Islam provides quite interesting and cool examples on this for instance where every organism is seen as a reflection of god's good.

8. Physical instincts vs. abstract mind?

Palang: With nonhuman animals we define sentience as the decisive and main criterion (in the secular and scientific context) to qualify the meaning and value of their *lives in the world*. These qualifiers are solely based on the biological constitution of a being and on our understanding of the biological traits.

In the great Abrahamic religions the *meaning of live depends on God's decrees* and on the concept of "sin". The notions of right and wrong, value and non-value, are measured against the parameter "God".

So, on the secular, scientific plane we have the *biological sentience of animality* on the one hand, and on the other hand we have an *abstract human framework of mind and belief* in the religious view of "Man". Aren't such separations between *sentience and mind* perhaps the very point, that keeps the *hierarchies and distinctions*, that we deal with in speciesism, arbitrarily alive? Isn't "feeling" also "mind"? The concepts of "Nature" and "God" thus create a dichotomy between a devalued bodily physicality and a God that is the upvalued mind of non-earthen-being. Is the reductionary and narrow concept of "instinct", i.e. that the animal *body should exclusively be ascribed sentience, but not vital mind and spirit*, not the necessary conclusion of a religious past, which had already pinned down nonhuman animals as the despised nature-physique of a mindless and non-intelligent earthly existence?

Can: These are very difficult questions to answer in one paragraph. There are examples for each cases ranging from Spinoza to Averroes, from Abelard to Siddharta. However, the Cartesian approach to animals has been refuted countless times, thus the philosophy adopted a broader and more scientifically oriented approach.

Palang: Thank you so much for helping us out with these questions Can!

Can: Thank you for these difficult questions :)

All links have been last accessed on: Oct 11th 2023.

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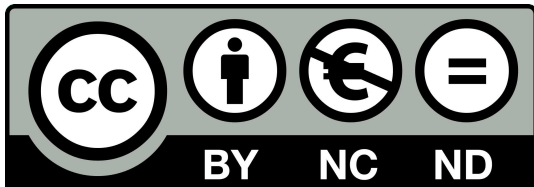
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Series: National Socialist Racism and Genocide; Photographic Sociology and Research Methodology by Miriam Y. Arani (2)

Translated and edited by Gita Marta Yegane Arani

This series:

This series is dedicated to the research and legacy of my sister Dr. Miriam Yegane Arani / Miriam Y. Arani – born in Siegen-Weidenau on 23.01.1964 – passed away in Frankfurt am Main on 16.07.2019. My sister chose in her work on National Socialist racist policies, foremostly as implemented in the so called Reichsgau Wartheland, a criminological approach, through the development of a historiographical-sociological methodology for the analysis of photographic materials in conjunction with the study of archival materials through source-critical and contextualized photo-historical proofs of authenticity. Meanwhile Miriam took a pedagogical approach to thus facilitate the introduction of the difficult subject matter in order to provide a broad, informed perspective on the events, especially in the "Reichsgau Wartheland", in a way which should be equally accessible to every interested reader.

Tags: national socialism, ns racism, photography, sociology, methodology

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Excerpts from:

Miriam Y. Arani: Fotografische Selbst- und Fremdbilder von Deutschen und Polen im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939–1945. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Region Wielkopolska, Hamburg 2008.

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[Excerpt: pp. 540-544.]

Photographs in card indexes and collections of the Gestapo I: German Resistance

The previously discussed identification service photographs of persons produced by the SS and police apparatus during World War II indicate that their design was highly standardized, but by no means completely unified. This becomes even clearer if one goes beyond the production and further use of photographs by the criminal police and also includes the handling of photographs of deviant persons in the National Socialist sphere of rule by the Secret State Police and the Race and Settlement Main Office of the SS.

The various offices of the RSHA [Reich Security Main Office], including the Criminal Investigation Department and the Gestapo, were able to draw on meticulously kept, extensive card indexes, files and other compilations of material in their investigations, which often included photographs. As the political police of the National Socialist state, the Gestapo collected information and material on all “political opponents” of National Socialism in order to persecute them and, in a large number of cases, to completely destroy their existence. On January 1, 1939, the main index of the Secret State Police Office in Berlin contained about two million cards with personal data and about 650,000 associated files, to which were also attached “confidentially recorded” or “officially produced” photographs of the persons concerned. In addition, the Gestapo created special photo collections on political opponents, especially Communists and Social Democrats. [258] The collected photographs included clippings from private photographs that had been confiscated during house searches or arrests. The photographic images from the Gestapo’s card indexes, files, and special collections were used for comparison with other photographs or descriptions of persons and were presented during interrogations, sometimes in the form of entire “criminals albums” [“Verbrecheralben”]. [259]

One “criminal album” from the point of view of the Gestapo, created during the war years in their Berlin headquarters, is the album on a German resistance group that was called the “Rote Kapelle” (“Red Orchestra”) by the Gestapo and the foreign/defense office of the OKW [Oberkommando der Wehrmacht]. [260] Behind the term “Rote Kapelle” was an oppositional network in Berlin around Harro Schulze-Boysen, a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force, and Dr. Arvid von Harnack, a national economist and senior government councillor in the

Ministry of Economics. [261] In 1942, the Gestapo worked on a collection of various oppositional groups in Department IV A 2 in an investigation complex entitled “Bolshevik High and Treasonous Organizations in the Reich and in Western Europe (Red Kapelle).” These groupings were not linked by a tightly and hierarchically organized party-political organization, but formed an informal network that brought together people of socially and culturally heterogeneous backgrounds for the exchange of opinions and oppositional activities against the National Socialist dictatorship. The first contacts of this network had already formed in the first years under National Socialist rule; the loosely connected circles of friends, discussion groups and leisure communities grew together after 1939 into a larger, multifaceted oppositional network – until its violent dismantling by the Gestapo in the fall of 1942. The previous findings about the members of this resistance group, as summarized by Jürgen Danyel, show that the informal organizational network known as the “Rote Kapelle” resisted any assignment to a party-political camp. [262] It involved at least three different opposition circles, between which only loose connections existed:

- around the initially independent resistance circles around Harro Schulze-Boysen on the one hand and Arvid von Harnack on the other; the two groups did not become more closely intertwined until 1939;
- around the Legation Councilor Rudolf von Scheliha and his confidants in the German Foreign Office,
- around a network of intelligence-bases, established in Western European cities by the Polish Communist Leopold Trepper on behalf of Soviet military reconnaissance since 1938, and a circle of people in Berlin who had already been active in intelligence work for the Soviet Union before 1933.

The various groups in Berlin were linked primarily by overlapping circles of friendship in which people from different milieus came together to exchange opinions, make contact with other opponents of Hitler, help the persecuted, document violent National Socialist crimes, and distribute pamphlets calling for resistance. The motivation of those involved was based on religious or political (communist, social democratic and liberal) convictions. The oppositional tendencies in the various circles of friends around Harnack and Schulze-Boysen were triggered, among other things, by their own experiences with National Socialist violence or by a principled aversion to National Socialist ideology. In the oppositional network, free discussions of new thoughts and drafts were possible; it opened up a social free space for the participants in the face of the pressure of conformity of the National Socialist dictatorship, in which they could assert their ethical or political identity and personal integrity. In total, the ramified oppositional network of interconnected circles comprised 50 to 100 people.

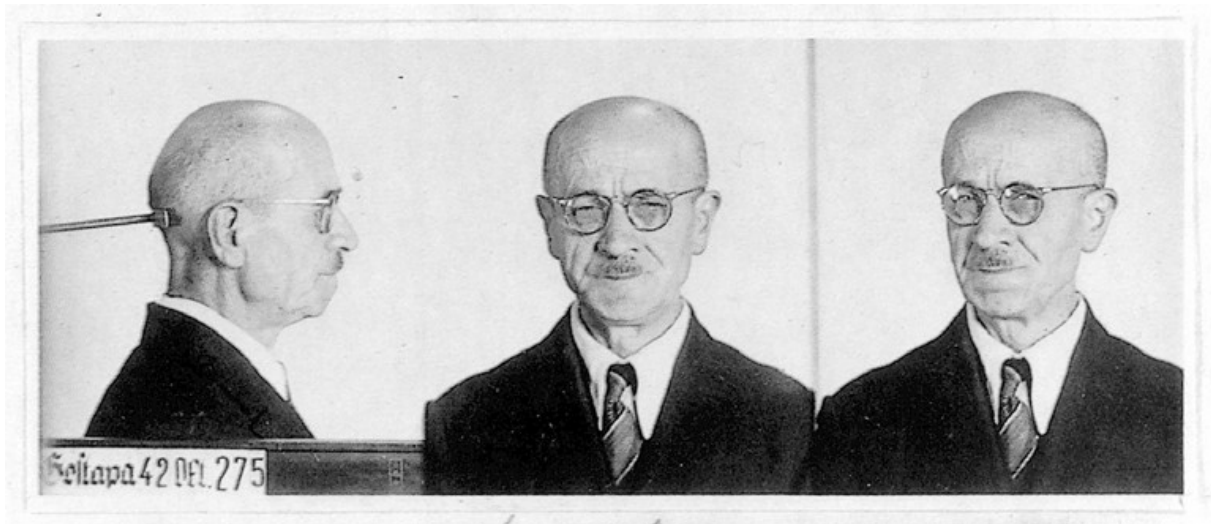


Fig. V.105: Gestapo Berlin, identification service person photograph of Stanislaus Wesolek, October 1942 (From: Griebel et al. 1992, p. 50)

From 1940 onward, the group around Harnack and Schulze-Boysen intensified their resistance activities and, in their search for possible cooperation partners against Hitler and the National Socialist regime, intensified their connections with illegal communist circles. Leopold Trepper sent Anatoly Gurevich to Berlin to meet Harro Schulze-Boysen in August 1941; the messages that Gurevich received from the Berlin resistance group during the conversation with Schulze-Boysen were radioed from Brussels to Moscow; therein consisted the entire “radio traffic” of the “Red Kapelle” with the Soviet Union, which later on was later embellished by the political right with numerous legends.

In the fall of 1942, the resistance group around Harnack and Schulze-Boysen was uncovered by the Gestapo and the Office of Foreign Affairs/Defense of the OKW, since the Gestapo monitored all bases of Soviet military intelligence. [263] Beginning on August 31, 1942, the Gestapo arrested more than a hundred men and women who belonged to the inner circle or wider circle of the “Rote Kapelle” in a large-scale arrest operation in Berlin. The subsequent investigation was in the hands of a special commission. The Gestapo was puzzled by the individuals it came across in its investigation of the organization, which was supposedly controlled from abroad: a ministry official, a Wehrmacht officer, many artists, and numerous women. These were groups of people whose loyalty to National Socialism they had expected. During the interrogations, those arrested declared that they had acted in responsibility for the continued existence of the German nation. Still in December 1942, a series of trials began before the Reichskriegsgericht in which more than 50 members of the Berlin resistance network were sentenced to death as “traitors to the people” [“Volksverräter”] and executed in Berlin-Plötzensee. [264]

Among those arrested was, for example, Stanislaus Wesolek (Fig. V.105), a cutter and carpenter born in Posen in 1878, who had joined the KPD in 1919 and had lived in Berlin-Kreuzberg since 1927 with his wife Frida, their three children and his parents-in-law. He was

arrested by the Gestapo together with his wife and his father-in-law Emil Hübner in the apartment they shared, sentenced to death by the Reich War Court for high treason and espionage, and executed in Berlin-Plötzensee on August 5, 1943. [265]



Fig. V.106: Gestapo Berlin, identification service person photography of Rudolf von Scheliha, October 1942 (From: Griebel et al. 1992, p. 46).

Also arrested was the aforementioned Legationsrat Rudolf von Scheliha (Fig. V.106). He had been born in Silesia in 1897, had enlisted as a war volunteer in 1918 after attending a grammar school. From 1919 to 1921, he studied law in Breslau (Wrocław) and Heidelberg, stood up against anti-Semitic tendencies in German higher education as chairman of the student parliament, and took part in the Upper Silesian Uprising in May 1921. From 1922 he worked for the Foreign Office, in whose service he was finally accepted in 1924. After assignments in Prague and Turkey, Scheliha was assigned to Poland from 1932, and from the end of that year to the embassy in Warsaw. In July 1933 he joined the NSDAP, but within his large circle of acquaintances he also had many contacts with opponents of the National Socialist regime and, as an embassy employee, helped them to be released or to leave the country. From August 1939 on, he was entrusted with the “observation and combating of Polish inflammatory propaganda” in the Information Department of the Foreign Office in Berlin. Through his professional duties, he became aware of Nazi crimes in Poland and used his official leeway to support persecuted members of the Polish intelligentsia. Scheliha was temporarily head of the Information Department and, from 1941, group leader responsible for nine country departments; his own area of work was “Central, Northern, and Eastern Europe.” In 1941 and 1942 he traveled to Switzerland several times and passed on von Galen's sermons against the euthanasia of the National Socialists; he also supported the dissemination of news about the mass murder of Jews. On Oct. 29, 1942, he was arrested in his office by the Gestapo, sentenced to death by the Reichskriegsgericht for treason on Dec. 14, 1942, and executed in Berlin-Plötzensee on Dec. 22, 1942. [266]



Fig. V.107: Gestapo Berlin, identification service photograph of Libertas Schulze-Boysen, September 1942 (From: Griebel et al. 1992, p. 11).

Harro Schulze-Boysen's wife was also imprisoned by the Gestapo in 1942. Libertas Schulze-Boysen (Fig. V.107), who had been born in Paris in 1913, had attended a girls' lyceum in Zurich and many European countries, and spoke several languages. She initially sympathized with National Socialism and, after working as a press officer for the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film company in Berlin, enlisted in the Reich Labor Service in 1935. After her marriage to Schulze-Boysen in 1936, she worked as a freelance writer for the theater and the press and, together with her husband, invited various guests to their shared apartment for casual conversations on cultural or philosophical topics. From 1941, she worked at the German Cultural Film Center [Deutsche Kulturfilmzentrale], which was under the Ministry of Propaganda. Here she secretly collected photographic images of German crimes in Eastern Europe, offering home leave from the Eastern Front – soldiers, officers, SS men – to develop their photographic films free of charge in the darkroom of the Kulturfilmzentrale. She secretly made duplicate prints for her own photo archive of the photographs she considered particularly meaningful. Libertas Schulze-Boysen friendly engaged the men who gave her the films in conversation, so that she also learned their names and addresses. The photographs she collected mainly concerned violent crimes against the civilian population in the Soviet Union. The secret collection of photographs with the written notes was to be used after the war to shed light on the crimes of the Nazi regime and to provide evidence for an indictment of the perpetrators. The members of Schulze-Boysen's group showed these photos during the war, among others to young Germans who had already begun to have doubts about National Socialism, in order to make the inhumanity of this dictatorship more palpable to them. When her husband had already been arrested, Libertas Schulze-Boysen destroyed all photographs and records. She was arrested on the train on September 8, 1942, while fleeing Berlin, sentenced to death in December 1942 by the Reichskriegsgericht for high treason, favoring the enemy, and espionage, and executed in Berlin-Plötzensee on December 22, 1942. [267]

Pictured here are some of the identification photographs taken of the prisoners by the Gestapo after the arrest operation. The Gestapo filled a whole album with such photographs of persons whom they assigned to the “Rote Kapelle”. All the photographs in the album on the “Rote Kapelle” were taken at the headquarters of the Secret State Police Office [Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt] (Gestapo) - part of the RSHA - at Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8 in Berlin, in a specially designated room. The signatures included in the picture are probably the internal signatures of the Gestapo headquarters at Prinz-Albrecht-Strasse 8. The taking of three-part photographs of the head of the person in question was part of the usual police procedure for the registration of arrested persons for identification purposes; in addition, full-figure photographs appear to have been taken while the person was standing. A comparison of the individual arrest dates with the sequence of photo numbers in the Gestapo album on the “Rote Kapelle” shows that a large number of photos were not taken immediately after the arrest, and that a large number of arrestees were photographed on individual days. The photographs taken for identification purposes were taken either when the prisoners were brought in or later in the course of their pre-trial detention on the occasion of an interrogation. [268]

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Footnotes

[257] Cf. IPN-AGK Photographs on the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager Lodz. [Polish Youth Detention Camp Lodz].

[258] Coburger 1992, p. 319.

[259] Coburger 1992, pp. 318, 320f.

[260] Griebel et al. 1992. Unlike other documents, the album was not destroyed in the last days of the war by its creators, the Gestapo, themselves. It also survived the heavy air raids in April/May 1944, during which large parts of the Gestapo headquarters were destroyed, as well as a heavy bombing raid on February 3, 1945, during which the building burned out completely. The album was last located in the basement of the building, where it was found in the first days of peace; according to Coburger 1992, p. 321 with further literature references and information on the album's tradition.

[261] Danyel 2004. The following account of the facts is based on a recent publication by Jürgen Danyel. For details, see also: Hans Coppi, Jürgen Danyel, Johannes Tuchel (eds.): Rote Kapelle im Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus. Berlin 1994. The instances of persecution in the Nazi state portrayed the Berlin resistance group as “paid traitors to the country” and as a Soviet espionage base controlled from Moscow among several others in Western Europe. The German resistance group known as the “Rote Kapelle” was surrounded by Nazi propaganda and, during the Cold War, legends of constant radio communication between Berlin and Moscow. In reality, however, radio communication failed after the

group's first attempt at radio communication due to a lack of technical knowledge on the part of those involved. There was only one several-hour conversation in August 1941 between a member of Soviet military intelligence and Harro Schulze-Boysen, in which the latter relayed information on the German fuel situation, aircraft production, chemical warfare, and the successes of German defenses. The decisive motivation for Harnack and Schulze-Boysen to pass military information to the Soviet Union had been Hitler's plans to attack the Soviet Union; they considered victory over Hitler possible only with support from a militarily and economically strong outside power. Thus, in March 1941, Harnack had sought contact with a secretary at the Soviet embassy in Berlin, where he eventually obtained two radio sets. Since no radio messages from Berlin subsequently arrived in Moscow, the General Staff's military intelligence service (GRU), which had bases in Western Europe, was called in.

[262] See Danyel 2004, cf. EdN, p. 705.

[263] The group around Schulze-Boysen and Harnack first came into the Gestapo's field of vision in February 1942, prompted by a leaflet demanding the immediate evacuation of the occupied Soviet Union and a peace settlement that would preserve Germany within the borders of spring 1939.

[264] Cf. EdN, p. 705 and Friedemann Bedürftig, *Lexikon Drittes Reich*. Hamburg 1994. p. 301.

[265] Griebel et al. 1992, pp. 50, 234-235.

[266] Griebel et al. 1992, pp. 46, 250-251. See also: Ulrich Sahm, Rudolph von Scheliha. *Ein deutscher Diplomat gegen Hitler*. Munich 1990.

[267] Griebel et al. 1992, pp. 11, 66-67; Kerbs et al. 1983, pp. 197f.; Danyel 2004, p. 404.

[268] Coburger 1992, p. 318f. The full-figure photographs are not reproduced in the 1992 publication. Two such photographs are found outside the album in surviving files. Other full-figure photographs with similar picture signatures are known from the files on the resistance group Europäische Union. In September 1933, the signature "Gestapa 1 IX 1933" was assigned. In the course of the following years, the signature was slightly changed a few times by rearrangements, but retained as characteristics information on year, month and serial number. From the year 1935, among others, the signature "Gestapa 381 August 35" is known. Presumably, a new series was started after the serial number 999, because the pegboard did not allow for four-digit numbers. In one case (Walter Husemann) it is known that the "photo session" was delayed because he had attempted to jump out of the window during an interrogation, dragging an officer with him. During this suicide attempt, Husemann sustained serious injuries, with which he was left in a cell. His condition was apparently also considered unsuitable for a Gestapo photograph. Coburger 1992, p. 319.

[Pages 540-544.]

Band II. Aus Kapitel VI: Polnische Urheber, Sammler und Distributoren von Fotografien zwischen Anpassung, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand

Volume II. From Chapter VI: Polish Authors, Collectors and Distributors of Photographs between Adaptation, Self-Assertion and Resistance

[Excerpt: pp. 625-629]

VI. Polish Authors, Collectors and Distributors of Photographs between Adaptation, Self-Assertion and Resistance

The preceding chapters described how the Nazi occupation administration in the Reichsgau Wartheland excluded Poles from the press and publishing industry and also as business owners in economic life and confiscated the assets of all Polish publishing houses, printing houses and photographic businesses. In addition, the German civil administration also banned the Poles in the Warthegau from private use and possession of cameras from June 1941. Arthur Greiser, as head of the civil administration at the military commander, had already announced during his first major speech in Posen in the fall of 1939 that now the Germans would be the “masters” and the Poles their “servants”. There was to be a principled legal inequality between Germans and Poles, which was outlined in the aforementioned November 1939 memorandum of the NSDAP's Racial Policy Office [Rassenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP] and largely realized in the following years in the Reichsgau Wartheland. [1]

The anti-Polish and anti-Jewish population policy of the National Socialist occupying power was only rarely and extremely selectively addressed in the legal German press of the time. The *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* mainly presented news concerning “Germans” in the sense of National Socialism and German “reconstruction” in the new Gau. [2]

From the Poles' point of view, September 1939 marked the beginning of a reign of terror that far exceeded what they had feared on the basis of previous experiences of conflict with the German nation. The reconstruction of the related photographic imagery of Polish authors faces far greater difficulties in finding sources than the reconstruction of the then omnipresent National Socialist propaganda imagery. The majority of the photographic primary sources from the Reichsgau Wartheland found in German and Polish depositories were photographs by German authors. The share of photographic images of Polish originators amounted to only about 10% in total, compared to a share of about 90% of photographs of certainly German or very probably German originators. The photographs of Polish originators had all been handed down in Polish depositories; not always, but often, the name of the photographer was also recorded when the images were inventoried. However, there are no written sources on the production contexts of these photographic images.

All Polish contemporary witnesses interviewed by the author who took photographs or collected photographs in the Warthegau at that time generally took much stricter security

precautions than was the case, for example, with the Berlin resistance group “Rote Kapelle.” [3]

While Libertas Schulze-Boysen made written notes on the front-line photographs of German homecomers that she collected in Berlin, the Poles in the Reichsgau Wartheland, who collected comparable photographs during the war, generally did not make written records of them. The Polish resistance organizations did not leave behind any written documents, as they could have fallen into the hands of the National Socialist persecution apparatus. For this reason, the following explanations are based primarily on an analysis of the photographic material identified, on statements by Polish contemporary witnesses, and on reflections on the significance of what was portrayed photographically by the Polish originators, collectors, and distributors, which result from a comparison with the contemporaneous “German” photographic publicity and with the secondary historical literature on Polish policy in the Warthegau.

1. thematic overview of various producers, collectors and distributors

As already indicated, the Polish creators, distributors and collectors of the surviving photographs can only be partially named. Apart from a few Poles who were more closely involved in resistance organizations, there were a large number of Poles who, to all appearances, did not join any underground organization, but who nevertheless acted in contradiction to the standards of the National Socialist occupying power in their handling of photographs. The members of Polish resistance groups, who also purposefully produced and forwarded photographs as part of their conspiratorial activities, formed a minority. A much larger number of Poles secretly photographed or, as photo lab workers, secretly duplicated photographs of Germans which were of outstanding importance from the Polish point of view. Among the Poles in the Warthegau, three groups of people can be roughly defined who produced, reproduced, passed on and disseminated photographic images under National Socialist occupation in the Wielkopolska region:

1. Poles who took photographs privately or collected photographs without a clearly defined political objective. Also included in the analysis are photographs by unknown German authors who captured certain phenomena of the National Socialist occupation period, which were of such high interest to Polish society that these photographs were handed down and published by Poles after 1945.
2. Poles who actively and in an organized manner participated in the resistance against the National Socialist occupying power. Because of the relatively small proportion of institutionally surviving photographs of Polish originators, privately surviving photographs of the Polish Scouts in Resistance 1939-1945 (Szare Szeregi) were included here. [4]
3. Poles who officially worked in German photographic enterprises and pursued their own goals in parallel to their official work assignment.

In the following, significant events and political developments will first be explained from the social perspective of the Polish population on the basis of corresponding photographs by Polish authors or Polish collectors and distributors. The term “collector” is used here to refer to all those persons who – regardless of whether they took photographs themselves or not – accumulated photographs of other originators in their private space to a significant degree. The term “distributors” is used here to refer to all those persons or organizations who deliberately reproduced photographs and forwarded them to third parties who had not previously been in possession of such photographs. Following the overview of some significant pictorial themes from the social perspective of the Polish population, is an outline of the working conditions and activities of Polish photo lab workers in German photo businesses in Poznan and the work of the Polish resistance organization Szare Szeregi in relation to their photographic legacies from the Wielkopolska region.



Fig. VI.01: Florian Zajac, house at ul. Wyspianskiego 18 after the German air raid in Poznan (Posen), September 1, 1939. Silver gelatin paper 8 x 5.5 cm (APP-PZZ Sign. 32)



Fig. VI.02: Florian Zajac, house at ul. Matejki 5 after the German air raid in Poznan (Posen) September 1, 1939. silver gelatin paper 8 x 5.5 cm (APP-PZZ Sign. 32)

Visible works of physical destruction

One of the photographs taken by Florian Zajac [5] on the first day of September 1939 in the center of the Polish city of Poznan (Posen) shows an apartment building partially destroyed by a German air raid on Poznan from a ground-level perspective (Fig. VI.01). Another photo of his, taken from a window, shows another residential building in the city center destroyed by a bombing raid (Fig. VI.02). Not many such photos survived from Poznan, as the city was hardly bombed at the beginning of the war. The small Polish town of Wielun (1939-1945: Welun or Welungen) in the area of the later Reichsgau Wartheland suffered most from the German air raids on September 1, 1939. Three quarters of the buildings in this small town were destroyed by the German Luftwaffe in the time of approximately one hour with 70 tons of bombs from the Sturzkampfgeschwadern 2 ("Immelmann"), 76 and 77; the German pilots strafed the fleeing Polish inhabitants from low altitude with airborne weapons. [6]

At the beginning of the war, buildings destroyed by the effects of war in the area of what was to become Warthegau were photographed by both Poles and Germans invading the country. The sudden extraordinary destruction was picture-worthy for Germans and Poles equipped with cameras, as long as they themselves were not directly threatened in their existence by the fighting. A large number of German soldiers arriving in Poland were able to take photographs in the shadow of the front without any hesitation, comparatively speaking. The inhabitants of the Polish town of Wielun, on the other hand, were so severely threatened in the fundamentals of their existence by the German military attack that they were no longer able to photograph what threatened their lives.



Fig. VI.03: unknown Polish photographer, public shooting of the five Poles Stanislaw Bednarz, Wiktor Bilon, Jozef Furmanek, Wojciech Kwiatkowski and Jan Pietraszewski on the market square in Szamotuly (Samter) by Einsatzgruppe VI of the Sipo, October 13, 1939. silver gelatin paper 9.1 x 13.9 cm. Condition: Bumped edges, small creases (MZGwS o. Inv. Nr.)

Other extraordinary events of the highest importance, which were also photographed by Poles, but quite predominantly by Germans, were the public executions of Polish "hostages" carried out by German executive forces after the occupation. The resistance of the Polish population, expected by the National Socialist regime, was to be broken by having Polish hostages vouch with their lives that no Pole would do violence to a German. As early as September and October 1939, uniformed German units carried out public shootings of selected Poles in small towns in the Poznan region. Often, German uniforms rounded up the inhabitants of the respective town to watch the execution.

Arthur Greiser, as the head of the civil administration, during the time of the German military administration (1.9.-25.10.1939), urged that more Poles be publicly executed in the military district of Posen. In his guidelines for the administrative structure, he gave a secret instruction according to which the new German district administrators and mayors should constantly demand the public execution of Poles. The new district administrator of Samter (Szamotuly), Otto Schulze-Anné, followed this instruction and convened a special court in Samter on October 12, 1939, staffed by members of Einsatzgruppe VI of the Sipo and the SD. This court sentenced ten Poles from the nearby village of Otorowo to death because on the night of October 11-12, the swastika flag on the Otorowo office building had been replaced by a Polish flag. Ten German executive forces shot five of the convicts still on October 12 in Otorowo in the evening at the church. The remaining five Poles were shot by a German gendarmerie detachment in the marketplace in Samter in the morning hours of October 13. For this purpose, the German police closed off the streets leading from the marketplace. On October 17, 1939, the new district administrator Schulze-Anné wrote in a secret report to Arthur Greiser that the Poles were still shouting patriotic slogans shortly before their deaths. [8]

The photograph shows that the square where the execution took place was surrounded by German uniforms with steel helmets. It is a shot from above, looking down over the uniformed and armed Germans. They were standing downstairs in front of the house where the photographer was. The picture captures a moment before the execution. In the centre of the picture, in front of a light-coloured wall on the right, the five Polish men that were to be executed can be seen. Neither they nor those carrying out the execution can be personally identified in this photograph, as the scale of the image is too small to determine the appearance of individuals with sufficient accuracy. The photographic image was taken from a great distance, which provided cover and security for the photographer. The German executive forces cordoned off a wide area of the marketplace, and inside the cordon only persons admitted to that area by the guards could take photographs. One may assume that these were usually only Germans who were on good terms with those carrying out the execution. It was very likely too risky for Poles to take photographs in this cordoned-off area.

A comparatively large number of photographic records of public executions under National Socialist occupation were located in the Polish depositories. Most of these photographs most likely originate from German authors. The histories of these photographs show that many Poles, faced with the great risk of photographing an execution themselves, found another way to come into possession of photographs of such executions: They reproduced corresponding photographs of Germans that passed through their hands. Polish reproductions were found, for example, in the case of the following execution, of which a German submitted a contemporary paper print of a photograph to the Federal Archives [Bundesarchiv] after 1945 (Figs. III.38 and VI.04). It is a photograph that was published after 1945, mainly in Poland and more rarely in Germany. [9] The unknown German who photographed this execution in Kornik (Burgstadt) subsequently submitted his film to a local photo lab for development and enlargement. Here worked the Pole Zbigniew Wojciechowski, who, according to the order,

made the prints requested by the German. Moreover, he additionally copied the photograph – without the knowledge of the client – in order to forward it in the Polish underground. [10] [...]

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Footnotes

[1] See Chapter IV.1: The national socialist racial ideology as a basis of the Poland policy in the Reichsgau Wartheland.

[2] Cf. Chapter III, National Socialist Press Control [Presselenkung] and Photographic Publicity.

[3] Cf. Chapter V.1.d.: Photographs of persons for identification purposes, photographs in Gestapo card indexes and collections I.

[4] The Polish owners of photographic documents of this organization in the Wielkopolska region mostly did not hand them over to state institutions during the Polish People's Republic. See here in the chapter the last section on the "Szare Szeregi."

[5] Cf. list of photographers in the appendix.

[6] See German Historical Institute Warsaw 2005, pp. 69-71. Contrary to the claim published in National Socialist Germany at the time that a Polish cavalry brigade was stationed in Wielun, no Polish military was stationed there at all. Rather, the first targets of the German pilots were residential buildings in the center of the town. The city hospital marked with a Red Cross, sacral monuments such as a 13th century church and a synagogue fell victim to the German air raid. The later German district leader of Wielun stated that the town had 16,000 inhabitants, all of whom had fled except for 200.

[7] This photograph was already published in Poland in 1967 based on a technically better original; see Datner 1967, p. 592.

[8] DO XIII, Doc. I-3, pp. 2f.; Nawrocki 1966, pp. 211f.; Datner 1967, p. 536; Zbrodnie Wehrmachtu pp. 233, 235; Luczak 1993, p. 23. According to Szymon Datner, Gendarmerie Master Konrad Wegner was responsible for carrying out the execution. According to Polish-language research, the five Poles executed in Samter were Stanislaw Bednarz, Wiktor Bilon, Jozef Furmanek, Wojciech Kwiatkowski, and Jan Pietrzaszewski. They were buried in a mass grave on the Catholic cemetery in Samter (Szamotuly).

[9] Published, among others, in: 1939-1945. we have not forgotten 1961, p. 26; DO XIII, Doc. I-96, p. p. 88; Luczak 1966, p. 79, fig. 13; Wronski/Zwolakowska 1971, p. 20, fig. 4;

Nawrocki 1972, fig. 1; Luczak 1990, Doc. I-96, p. 88; Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1996, p. 29.

[10] Oral information from Dr. Marian Wozniak, Fundacja Armii Krajowej w Poznaniu, Poznan 1996.

Band II. Aus Kapitel VI: Polnische Urheber, Sammler und Distributoren von Fotografien zwischen Anpassung, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand

Volume II. From Chapter VI: Polish Producers, Collectors and Distributors of Photographs between Adaptation, Self-Assertion and Resistance (625)

3. photography in the Polish resistance in the Reichsgau Wartheland (720)

[...] culture and education (729); Polish resistance to Nazi educational policy (735); the destruction of Polish books (743); documentation and foreign information (747)

[Excerpt: pp. 729-752]

Culture and Education

Other important areas in the resistance activities of the Szare Szeregi in the Warthegau were culture and education. In order to adequately assess the significance of the Szare Szeregi's cultural activities in Poznan and their importance for Polish society, it is necessary to consider the occupation policy background against which these activities unfolded. National Socialist cultural policy in the Warthegau followed in its basic features a völkisch-racial ideology, which was expressed in the fact that the various "ethnic groups" were allowed cultural activity only in accordance with their classification in the National Socialist racial hierarchy. Adolf Hitler and the top officials of the NSDAP believed that foreign peoples, such as the Poles, should not be educated to "German" culture because otherwise they might acquire leadership knowledge ["Führungswissen"], which was to be prevented. To the Poles, the Nazi occupation forces conceded at most "low-level" culture; "highlevel" culture was to be reserved exclusively for "Germans" or "north-racial" ["nordrassischen"] peoples. This racially based cultural policy of the National Socialist occupiers was implemented more rigorously and radically in the "incorporated eastern territories" than in the General Government administration ["Generalgouvernement"] since the former Polish western territories were to be completely "Germanized." Reichsstatthalter Greiser pursued the anti-Polish cultural policy most consistently in his "model gau" Wartheland: the cultural and educational offerings established here from 1939/40 onward were for the benefit of "Germans" only. Poles were completely excluded from the generously funded "German" cultural life. The German civil administration proceeded as if Polish culture had never existed. Poland's material cultural assets were looted and destroyed, and the Poles themselves were forbidden any cultural activity in the Warthegau. The previously existing Polish education system was dismantled, and the Poles were excluded from acquiring education. The Nazi occupying power denied the "alien" ["fremdvölkischen"] Poles in the Reichsgau Wartheland any civic school and university education in order to prevent any future resistance against the German occupiers. The occupying power also denied the Poles participation in cultural life: by destroying Polish culture, by forbidding Poles to participate in the cultural life of the Germans, and by forbidding Poles to engage in self-determined cultural activity. The

German occupying power enforced the underlying cultural hegemonic claim against the Poles by police means. Any memory of the Polish nation and history in the public sphere and in the consciousness of the population was to be annihilated. For this purpose, Polish monuments were demolished, Polish place and street names were exchanged for German ones, and so forth. The Poles in the Gau were to be educated into a mass of unresistant labor slaves, they were to be denationalized and de-culturalized. National Socialist cultural policy strove to turn them into a population group without intelligence and without national memory. Against the background of these goals, any cultural activity by Poles appeared to the National Socialist rulers in the Warthegau as acts of political resistance. [210]



Fig. VI.151: Unknown photographer (he can be seen on the left in the picture field at the level of the pianist's neck in the mirror), concert and poetry recitation. Professor Janina Thomas is playing music by Chopin on the grand piano. Poznan, May 6, 1942. silver gelatin print 9 x 13,5 cm (SSW V/1)

The central and at the same time racist doctrine of all National Socialist statements about “Polish” culture was: Poland's culture was created mainly by Germans; the Poles themselves did not create culture. In those cases where the creative ability of Polish artists was difficult to dispute, German racial experts tried to prove that the artist in question was of “German” descent. The best-known example of this is the Nazi regime's treatment of the works and origins of the Polish composer Frederic Chopin: first, his music was banned, and from 1943 Chopin was claimed to be a composer of “German” descent and a representative of “German” musical culture. [211]

Under the pretext of preserving and researching “German” culture, the National Socialist regime carried out art theft on a considerable scale in occupied Poland. In the Warthegau, representatives of the German occupying power had Christian sacred art from the Gniezno Cathedral transported to the territory of the Reich (“Reichsgebiet”) and systematically searched museums, castles, farms, collections, libraries, and private residences for works of art and valuables. Responsible for the art theft and the further administration of the looted property were, among others, the “General Trustee for Securing German Cultural Property in the Incorporated Eastern Territories” [“Generaltreuhänder für die Sicherung deutschen Kulturgutes in den eingegliederten Ostgebieten“] appointed by the Main Trust Office East (“Haupttreuhandstelle Ost“) in December and the SS organization “Forschungs- und Lehrgemeinschaft Ahnenerbe e.V.” in Berlin. The Nazi occupying power confiscated works of art and valuable objects in Polish-Christian and Polish-Jewish possession under the pretext of securing “German” culture.

The concept of “securing German cultural property” [“Sicherung deutschen Kulturguts”] was so broadly defined in the Reichsgau Wartheland from 1939 to 1945 that it actually resulted in the confiscation of all art and valuables from Polish and Jewish ownership. In 1941, Reichsstatthalter Greiser enforced a district-specific Gau claim to the on-site utilization of Polish art and valuables confiscated in the Wartheland; since then, the “General Trustee” [“Generaltreuhänder”] of the Haupttreuhandstelle Ost has limited himself to transporting only the more valuable confiscated objects into the Reich territory [“Reichsgebiet”]. [212]



Fig. VI.152: Zdzislaw Kolodziejczak, The academic circle of the Szare Szeregi at a meeting on the occasion of St. Andrew's Day (Andrzejki). In the back row second from right: Edward Serwanski; in the front row second from left: Aleksandra Markwitz. Poznan, November 1942. Reproduction (SSW V/4)

The cultural activity of Poles under German occupation in the Warthegau was only partly made impossible by expressed prohibitions. Of decisive importance for the destruction and prevention of Polish cultural life was the dismantling of all Polish cultural institutions, the state-organized theft of their property, and the repressions against well-known Polish cultural workers. The basic decrees for this were issued by Arthur Greiser already as Chief of the Civil Administration at the Military Commander in September and October 1939. All Polish cultural institutions in the area of the later Warthegau were confiscated by the Treuhandstelle Ost in order to hand them over to "Germans". [213] On the basis of the confiscated assets of Polish cultural institutions, the National Socialist occupying power pursued the "Aufbau" ["construction"] of a "German" cultural life in the Reichsgau Wartheland.



Fig. VI.153: Zygmunt Zuraszek, Szare Szeregi celebrate "Andrzejki" (St. Andrew's Day) - wax casting. Poznan district of Krzyzowniki, 1942 (?). Reproduction (SSW V/6)

Already in the first months after the German occupation of Poland, "German" theaters began operating in Poznan and Lodz (Litzmannstadt). In mid-October 1939, the large theater near the castle in Poznan was opened as "Deutsches Theater" ["German Theater"]. In Lodz, a German theater began operating in January 1940. The "Deutsches Theater" in Posen was extensively rebuilt after a few performances and finally reopened in March 1941 as the "Reichsgautheater" with a "Führerloge". During his speech on the occasion of the opening of the "Reichsgautheater" in Posen, Reich Propaganda Minister Goebbels referred to the German theaters "in the East" as "the firm castles of our will to colonize" ["die festen Burgen unseres Kolonisationswillens"]. [214] Reichsstatthalter Greiser aimed to turn the Gau capital of Posen into a "showcase of the Warthegau" ["Schaufenster des Warthegaus"] in which "German culture" was to be given prominence. German high culture was to be offered to the German occupying society in Posen and the cultural hegemony of "Germanness" was to be demonstrated to the Poles. To this end, the National Socialist occupation administration provided generous funding and held series of events lasting several days, such as the "Ostdeutschen Kulturtag" ["East German Culture Days"]. [215]

Financially, the German civil administration very generously supported, for example, the "German" musical life in Warthegau. During the occupation period 1939-1945, several German orchestras, NSV concerts and music weeks were organized. The Reichsstatthalter's

wife, the pianist Maria Greiser-Korfer, also performed at WHW and NSV concerts in Wartheland. Reichsstatthalter Greiser especially promoted the “German” music school system, so that by 1944 more than 20 music schools for about 3,000 “German” children and young people had been established in his territory. In addition, the Hitler Youth in the Wartheland developed numerous musical activities in the form of “HJ-Bannorchestern”, small “Spielscharen” and “Fanfarenzüge”. The musical activities of the German occupational society were intended to strengthen the sense of community among the “Germans” in the Gau and to promote the integration of Germans from the Reich, the people, and abroad [“Reichs-, Volks- und Auslandsdeutschen”]. [216]



Fig. VI.154: Zygmunt Zuraszek, Szare Szeregi celebrate “Andrzejki” (St. Andrew’s Day) – fortune telling game with shoes. Poznan district of Krzyzowniki, 1942 (?). Reproduction (SSW V/7)

Against the background of the National Socialist cultural policy in the Warthegau, which denied Poles access to all cultural institutions – museums, exhibitions, concerts, theaters and cinemas – the high value that the Szare Szeregi attached to culture and education in their political underground work becomes clearer. The members of this Polish resistance group were very interested in cultural activities and in the transmission of Polish culture. Since, as Poles, they were forbidden to attend official cultural events and institutions in the Warthegau, they developed their cultural activities mainly in private rooms. While the young Poles who had joined the Szare Szeregi usually made excursions into the countryside in their free time in

the spring and summer, they more commonly organized meetings and events in private homes in the fall and winter. [217] Mieczyslaw Knapski photographed, among other things, one of the private concerts they organized (Fig. VI.150). Another photograph shows a Polish musician playing music by Chopin on the piano during one of such clandestine meeting (fig. VI.151). Since Frederic Chopin's compositions and some Polish songs had been banned by the National Socialist occupation forces, the Szare Szeregi made sure – before such music was played – that the German apartment neighbors were absent or otherwise (out of solidarity or ignorance) “tolerant.” [218] Moreover, the Szare Szeregi secretly organized small celebrations during the period of occupation in the Warthegau, especially on national and religious holidays. Music was also played and sung at these celebrations, but often only quietly because of the National Socialist bans on Polish music. [219]

The safest place to take photos after the ban was in private interiors. [220] The Szare Szeregi in Poznan often met in groups of five to seven people. For security reasons, these meetings took place in constantly changing apartments. Less frequently – about twice a year, they met in larger groups of about twenty people. Mieczyslaw Knapski also reported on the security measures they took for some of their group photos: when a group was photographed, everyone would quickly line up for the picture and then disperse as quickly as possible. If a very large group was being photographed in a private apartment, one person would leave immediately after the picture was taken with the camera and film so that nothing could be found by the German police during a search. [221]



Fig. VI.155: Mieczysław Knapski, Szare Szeregi at a secret joint Christmas party. Poznań, December 1942. The photo was taken with a self-timer; the then 19-year-old photographer can be seen at the far right of the picture. New print from old 35mm negative (private property Mieczysław Knapski)

Comparatively many of the identified photographic images show members of the Szare Szeregi in Poznań on religious holidays, namely St. Andrew's Day ("Andrzejki"), Christmas, and Epiphany. A photograph by Zdzisław Kolodziejczak [222] (fig. VI.152) shows a group of the academic circle of the Szare Szeregi on St. Andrew's Day in 1942. If one looks more closely at the background of the group photograph, one can make out the light-proof windows of the room in which those depicted were staying.

St. Andrew's Day is celebrated on November 30 and coincides with the end of the church year, which begins on Advent 1. Andrew is a martyr mentioned in passing in the Christian Acts of the Apostles. According to the Catholic faith, on St. Andrew's Day it is supposed to be possible to see into the future; therefore, on this day oracle customs are traditionally practiced by Catholics. In the Wielkopolska region, which is the subject of this study, it was common among Polish Catholics in the first half of the 20th century to cast wax figures and perform some other fortune-telling games on St. Andrew's Day. A photograph by Zygmunt Zuraszek [223] from the occupation period shows members of the Szare Szeregi in Poznań casting wax on St. Andrew's Day: hot wax was poured into a pot of cold water and the resulting wax figures were interpreted as symbolic indications of the future (Fig. VI.153). Another photograph shows the young Poles engaged in another popular contemporary

oracular custom: lining up shoes one after the other was supposed to predict who would be the next to marry (Fig. VI.154).



Fig. VI.156: unknown photographer, group 21 PDM of the Szare Szeregi during a musical performance in a private apartment during the Christmas holidays. Poznan, Christmas 1943 (?). Reproduction (SSW V/8)

The Szare Szeregi also held small clandestine celebrations on Christmas holidays. In December 1942, Mieczysław Knapski [224] photographed one such gathering with a self-timer. The photographer, then 19 years old, can be seen on the far right of the picture (Fig. VI.155). A photographic image of another group during the Christmas holidays shows them performing music in an apartment. Two young men visible in the foreground are playing the accordion, a loud and mobile keyboard instrument that was very popular at the time. The four young men in the background are all looking together into a book of lyrics and sheet music that the second from the left is holding in his hands (Fig. VI.156). A photograph has also survived from the day of the Three Kings in January 1943. It shows members of the Academic Circle of the Szare Szeregi in Poznań after the election of the “Almond King” (krol migdalowy): it is the first man from the right in the back row, who can be recognized by a shiny metallic crown on his head (Fig. VI.157).



Fig. VI.157: Zdzisław Kolodziejczak, Academic Circle of the Szare Szeregi on the Day of the Three Kings after the election of the "Almond King" (krol migdalowy). In the front row second from left: Aleksandra Markwitz. Poznań, January 1943. reproduction (SSW V/5)

Polish Resistance against the National Socialist Educational Policy

The complete restructuring of the educational system in the newly formed administrative unit can also be included in the National Socialist cultural policy in the Reichsgau Wartheland. In the military district of Posen, schooling for German children was resumed as early as the beginning of October 1939. At first, it was only a small number of schools with relatively few students, mainly children of members of the former German minority in Poland. Since the willingness of "Reich Germans" ["Reichsdeutschen"] to settle permanently in the new "eastern territories" ["Ostgebieten"] also depended on whether a fully developed educational system was available, the German civil administration pushed ahead with the establishment of a multilevel school system – corresponding to that in the Reich territory ["Reichsgebiet"]. The number of school-age "German" children in the Gau rose steadily as a result of the foreign Germans ["Auslandsdeutschen"] resettled "home to the Reich" ["heim ins Reich"] and arriving in the Warthegau. Between 1939 and 1945, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, vocational schools, technical schools and the "Reichsuniversität Posen" were opened here for German children and youth. In the Gau area, 1,100 elementary schools with 90,000 students and 1,850 teachers, 22 middle schools with 18,000 students, and 25 high schools with 5,530 students and 542 teachers were established. In addition, several vocational schools

were opened in Poznan and Lodz (Litzmannstadt). In Reisen (Rydzyna) near Lissa (Leszno), the first Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalt (Napola) in the Warthegau was opened in April 1940. All these educational institutions were open only to “Germans”; there were 40 to 48 students to one teacher. Throughout the occupational period, the German civil administration of the Warthegau complained about a shortage of German teachers. The teachers seconded from the territory of the Reich seemed unsuitable to the National Socialist rulers and local Germans, since the majority of them were German women. The “teacher shortage” caused by the German civil administration itself - due to the dismissal of all Polish teachers and the derogatory attitude towards women - was compensated by using German students and BDM girls as assistant teachers. [225]

The children of the foreign German resettlers in the Warthegau were often initially taught in the resettlement camps by teachers from the region of origin. The German occupation administration established boarding and residential schools [Heimschulen] in the newly formed Gau, in addition to the usual types of schools found in the Reich territory, in which selected children of expatriate German resettlers [“auslandsdeutschen Umsiedlern“], members of the German minority and Polish children judged to be “north-racial” [“nordrassisch”] were to be “re-educated” into “German” children under constant control: they were to be deprived of “Polish influences” and prevented from using the Polish language. [226] In the second half of the occupational period, German language courses were also held for adult “ethnic Germans” [“Volksdeutsch”]. A part of the former German minority in Poland had been classified as “German” solely on the basis of family descent, but their colloquial language was Polish. These were usually the members of DVL [“Deutsche Volksliste”] groups 3 and 4 in the Warthegau. Language courses were set up for them from 1943 as part of the “Volkstumspolitische Erwachsenenbildung” [adult education in the line of “Volk”-policies] program. The NS-Frauenschaft played a central role in this ‘language promotion’, which was partly carried out by coercion: it taught the German language and the National Socialist worldview to “language-endangered” women in sewing, baking and cooking courses at the NSDAP Gauschulungshaus Posen. [227]

Before the German attack on Poland, a Polish university existed in Poznan (Posen); it had already been closed by the German occupation forces in September 1939. On September 11, 1939, the Faculty of Medicine was occupied by Germans; from the Faculty of Chemistry, larger and more expensive equipment was taken away to the territory of the Reich. On September 21, 1939, the main building (Collegium Minus) was sealed by the Gestapo; all Polish members of the University were dismissed. The Polish scientists were resettled in the Generalgouvernement, imprisoned, or executed as part of the “political purge” [“politische Flurbereinigung”]; as a result of the German occupation, about 70 scientists of the university lost their lives. [228]

Although there were limits to the establishment of new scientific institutions under wartime conditions, Reichsstatthalter Greiser was able to push through the opening of a new university in Posen and several non-university research institutions in the Reichsgau Wartheland. As early as October 1939, Greiser had approached Adolf Hitler for the purpose of founding a

National Socialist university in Posen, who finally decreed its establishment. The ceremonial founding act of the “Reichsuniversität Posen” took place on April 20, 1941, Hitler’s birthday. It was the first purely National Socialist university to be founded. It was to be a “model example of National Socialist cultural policy” and, as a center of German “Ostforschung,” to provide scientific support for the eugenic “Volkstumspolitik” in the Eastern Occupied Territories. [229] Teaching and research at this university was dominated by the disciplines that served to secure and expand National Socialist power: Law, Economics, Technology, Medicine, and Agriculture. The philosophical subjects were reduced to “volkswissenschaftliche” aspects: “Volkskunde” and racial studies, history and language of the Jews. The historical science pursued here served the political goal of proving historically the superiority of “German” culture. [230]

After the official founding of the “Reichsuniversität” in Posen, 191 students were enrolled in the summer semester of 1941; by the summer of 1944, there were already 1,228 students. The majority of them came from the territory of the Reich, and over 60% of them were women. The majority of the men studying here were invalids of the Wehrmacht. Poles in the Gau were denied access to this new university. Applicants to the “Reichsuniversität Posen” had to present, in addition to a high school diploma, an “ancestral passport”, they were not allowed to have Jewish or Polish relatives, they had to have been members of a Nazi youth organization before 1939, etc. [231]

The cultural policy of the National Socialist occupying power in the Warthegau also included a complete dismantling of the Polish educational system. In order to fundamentally prevent the emergence of intelligentsia among the Poles in the Reichsgau Wartheland and to re-educate the Poles into a “working people” [“Arbeitsvolk”] devoid of history and culture, the Polish population was systematically denied access to the educational system. The German civil administration had all Polish schools and colleges in the area of the later Warthegau closed after the occupation of the area in 1939 and subsequently dissolved them completely. The Nazi occupiers did not publicly proclaim that they would destroy Polish educational system, but they enforced this low-key by closing Polish educational institutions under various pretexts and not reopening them. As late as September 1939, Greiser, as head of the Civil Administration, arranged with the military commander for the closure of all Polish schools and the dismissal of all Polish teachers. [232]

In place of the previously existing Polish educational institutions, the National Socialist occupying power created so-called “Pole schools” [“Polenschulen”] in the Reichsgau Wartheland. This was a curriculum radically mutilated on the basis of racial-ethnic ideology for the training of Polish labor slaves for the Germans, who were supposed to be as ignorant as possible. The “Pole schools” opened by the German civil administration in the Warthegau corresponded conceptually most exactly to the ideas of Reichsführer SS and Chief of the German Police, Heinrich Himmler, which he had formulated in 1940 in his “Thoughts on the Treatment of the Foreign Peoples in the East” [“Gedanken über die Behandlung der Fremdvölkischen im Osten”]: [233] “The aim of this elementary school must be merely: simple calculation to a maximum of 500, writing the name, a teaching that it is a divine

command to be obedient to the Germans and to be honest, hardworking and well-behaved. Reading I do not consider necessary.” [234]

The schooling of Polish children and young people in the Warthegau was largely determined by a decree issued by Viktor Böttcher, the “Posener Regierungspräsident” [“president of the Posen government”], which outlined the basic principles of “German” schooling for Poles. According to it, Poles were to be prevented at all costs from obtaining an education that might enable them to pass themselves off as Germans. Polish children were to be taught only two to three hours a day in classes as large as possible. Contrary to Hitler's ideas, they were to be educated in the Warthegau primarily in “order, cleanliness, discipline and decency.” They were to be taught the German language only to the extent that they understood oral and written work instructions. Under no circumstances were they to learn error-free German, so that their poor German would make them recognizable as Poles. [235]

In effect, the German civil administration in the Reichsgau Wartheland was very slow to set up a few such “Pole schools”. In general, priority was given to the establishment of schools for German children and adolescents. Only in a few districts of the Warthegau “Polish schools” were established. Four such schools were located on the outskirts of the city of Posen and reached about 10,000 children between the ages of 9 and 13. In them, Polish children were ‘taught’ for two to three hours on weekdays by German assistants, for example by daughters or wives of local Germans; there were about 100 to 150 pupils to one teacher. According to the ideas of the German civil administration, the school attendance of Polish children was to be limited to three to five years. Sports, music, history and geography were completely excluded from the curriculum. The children were to be taught only elementary knowledge of the four basic arithmetic concepts, weights and measures, agricultural plants and farm animals. The focus of the lessons was on “practical work exercises,” i.e., the Polish children were assigned to collect plants or old materials, to clean green areas, and to work in fields, forests, and gardens. [236]

The National Socialist occupation forces pursued a racist language policy towards Polish children and young people in the Warthegau, refusing them lessons both their native language and the new official language. Viktor Böttcher, the district president of Posen, told the Reich Ministry of Education in 1940 that the aim in Warthegau was to “eradicate Polish culture and language”. In November 1940, Reich Governor Greiser considered a general ban on the Polish language unfeasible, but at the same time he was opposed to teaching the German language to Polish children and young people to the same extent as to Germans. On Greiser's instructions, only German vocabulary, but no German grammar, was to be taught in the “Polenschulen.” [237]

The National Socialist occupation administration in the Warthegau did not continue the previously existing Polish school system with the “Polenschulen”, but sacked, displaced and murdered the Polish teachers. They created a new type of school specifically for the “Fremdvölkischen” [“foreign peoples”] in the Gau, who were now to be taught separately from the “Germans.” School education for Polish children and youth was mutilated beyond

recognition by lowering the level of instruction to pre-bourgeois conditions. Young Poles were to be taught their inferior status at an early age in order to consolidate the hegemony of the German occupying society. The “Polenschulen” served the political goal of counteracting the formation of gangs among the native children and youths who often roamed the streets and teaching them to become underintelligent workers. It should be noted that the illiteracy rate in the Poznan region in the early 1930s was not quite 3%, and 85% of all school-age Polish children in the region attended school before the war began. [238]

The Szare Szeregi in the Wielkopolska region gave great importance to the education of Polish children and youth. The secret education system was one of the most important and characteristic areas of the Polish resistance. Throughout German-occupied Poland, the Polish underground endeavored to build a clandestine education system that included Polish underground universities in Warsaw and Krakow. The secret education system of the Poles was highly developed, especially in the Generalgouvernement, but extended into the Warthegau and, along with illegally celebrated Polish cultural events and holidays, formed the basis of the Poles’ cultural self-assertion.

Since there was no possibility of organizing secret Polish university events in the Warthegau, the teachers and students resettled from Poznan founded the secret Uniwersytet Ziemi Zachodnich (University of the Western Territories) in Warsaw in 1940 in agreement with the Polish underground authorities. The secret education system was intended to minimize the deculturalization of Poles growing up and their deliberate stupidization, which the National Socialists were striving for. The secret education system was intended to minimize the deculturalization of Poles growing up and their deliberate stultification, which the National Socialists were striving for. The organization of secret education in the Reichsgau Wartheland was more restricted than in the other annexed and occupied territories of Poland. The Polish population in the Warthegau was subject to the comparatively strongest control by the German occupying society. Due to the preceding “politischen Flurbereinigung” [“political cleansing”] and the expulsions of Poles, there was a shortage of Polish teachers for the secret classes. In the Warthegau, therefore, the secret education of Poles did not reach such a large scale as in other areas. The greatest development of secret education was in the Poznan area, where it encompassed several thousand children and young people. [239]



Fig. VI.158: Zdzisław Kolodziejczak, youth group "Biedronki" of the Academic Circle of Szare Szeregi. In the front row, far right, Aleksandra Markwitz. Poznań, 1943 (?). New print from old negative (?) (SSW VII/2)

The Szare Szeregi organized secret lessons, auto-didactic learning groups, cultural and sporting events for Polish children and youth in Poznań and the Wielkopolska region in order to educate them in a patriotic and religious spirit and to prevent them from becoming illiterate. The Polish children were mostly taught by Polish youths; the older youths formed autodidactic learning groups to continue learning by themselves, since suitable teachers were rarely found. In Poznań, the Szare Szeregi had difficulty finding Polish teachers for a secret Polish high-school graduation committee. [240]

During the occupation, for example, Aleksandra Markwitz taught two groups of ten children and teenagers each in Poznań. The Polish pupils were supposed to learn, among other things, about the history and culture of the individual regions of Poland in the secret lessons of the Szare Szeregi. And they were not allowed to tell anyone that they were taking part in the secret lessons. [241] Markwitz founded a coeducational secret instruction group in Poznań in 1941 under the name "Biedronki" (fig. VI.158). The group consisted of a total of ten Polish boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 18. A second group, consisting exclusively of girls aged 12 to 14, was founded by Markwitz in 1942. [242] Mieczysław Knapski possessed photographs of a secret autodidactic learning group of the Szare Szeregi, whose meetings he himself attended; Knapski is the third from the left in the picture (Fig. VI.159). It is the same

group of people that was already seen at a small Christmas party in 1942 (Fig. VI.155). Mieczyslaw Knapski reported that at that time they were studying Polish literature, mathematics and English in their study group. [243] For those who, like Mieczyslaw Knapski, had attended a grammar school before the war, the occupation policy destroyed all opportunities to complete their schooling in an appropriate manner. The sixteen-year-old at the outbreak of the war was already twenty years old at the time when the photograph shown here was taken. One by one, each participant in this group prepared a topic for a meeting and lectured to the others about it.



Fig. VI.159: Mieczyslaw Knapski, Secret autodidactic study group of the Szare Szeregi (samokształcenie). Poznan 1943. third from left: Mieczyslaw Knapski. New print after old Kleinbildnegativ (private property Mieczyslaw Knapski)

At first glance, the photo appears to be a shot of a gathering of neatly dressed urban middle-class youths waiting for the shutter to finally be pressed so they can continue with their conversation or other activities. Somewhat baffling is the tension between the emphatically well-groomed appearance of the persons and the extraordinarily sparse ambience, for example, the modest tablecloth that one would expect to find in a kitchen. The absence of any Nazi insignia, as well as any objects that could conceivably be considered attributes of the “German,” is a vague indication that there are no Germans in this photograph. The entire group is facing the camera and visibly concerned with assuming an advantageous posture for the photograph: The girl in the center of the picture and a second one in the left half of the picture are smiling, the three young gentlemen are looking into the camera as if frozen. The presence of a camera changes the situation recognizably: the girls strive for a favorable ‘photo

face'. In view of the camera, the two women with white collars and more rigid hairstyles on the left edge of the picture and in the right half of the picture seem to behave ignorantly. The girl on the left is looking at the pages of an open thin notebook and the one sitting on the right is studying a book with utmost concentration. Both of them, unlike the others, avert their gaze from the camera and turn it to a reading. With this behavior, they initially seem to deviate the most from the visibly intended positive self-portrayal of the group for the photographic shot. Yet they are the ones who, through their self-presentation, point a foreign observer to the purpose of the meeting: learning from books and written records.



Fig. VI.160: unknown photographer, Szare Szeregi during a joint discussion of class reading. The second from the right is Hieronim Lawniczak, the director of the local museum after 1945. Krotoschin (Krotoszyn) 1942. silver gelatin paper 6 x 9 cm (SSW VI/1)

Many of the photographs show the secret teaching groups in rooms darkened with curtains (see Fig. VI.158-161). On the one hand, others were not to be given an insight into the conspiratorial activities of the young Poles; on the other hand, blackout was mandatory during the war years. Secret study groups such as the one shown here met under the necessary security precautions in changing private apartments in Posen and in some other small towns of the Warthegau, such as Krotoschin (Fig. VI.160-161). The Polish children and their parents, as well as the juveniles, took great risks for the illegal education in the underground, since detection of their violation of the German regulations was punished with the utmost severity by the occupying National Socialist regime. [244]

In the photographs of the secret cultural events and of the secret classes of the Szare Szeregi, one always sees young Polish women and Poles in Sunday clothes, smiling in a friendly manner – for a nice photo, which should make them forget the sufferings of the time and remember the positive. In discussions with those people who showed the author such photographs, the fear was often expressed that ignorant viewers might think that “the Poles” were doing well during that time after all. In fact, the clothing of the young Poles can lead to a misunderstanding if Sunday clothes are mistaken for everyday wear. An example of this is a photograph showing Ryszard Nieborak, a trained lawyer and Boy Scout instructor, in his everyday work clothes in Posen in 1942 (fig. VI.162). He was born in 1915 in Rawich County, had graduated from law school in Poznan in 1937, and was licensed as a judge. He had already joined the Polish Scouts in 1924. Under the German occupation, Ryszard Nieborak was employed as a laborer and as an apprentice in construction companies. In the resistance, from 1941 he led a special sabotage group at the Szare Szeregi in Poznan; from 1942 he also led the sabotage group of the Poznan Armia Krajowa. On February 5, 1944, the Gestapo arrested Nieborak. He was held in the Gestapo House Prison (Dom Zolnierza) and Fort VII, and on June 29, 1944, he was shot in a mass execution at the Zabikowo camp. [245]



Fig. VI.161: unknown photographer, Szare Szeregi studying secretly – Polish lessons. Krotoschin (Krotoszyn) 1944. silver gelatin paper 6 x 9 cm (SSW VI/2)

The group portraits or photographic self-images of the Szare Szeregi fulfilled their personal needs for a – also visually – dignified existence. The photos shown here probably did not

primarily fulfill a documentary function, but rather formed a visible trace of their self-assertion against the National Socialist occupying power in the private imagery of the Polish scouts. The Szare Szeregi staged themselves – contrary to the National Socialist Polish policy – as members of the bourgeois middle classes. Moreover, the history of private photography shows that people do not usually include images of their personal suffering or the suffering of their neighbors in their private imagery. [246] Insofar, also for the Szare Szeregi, all representations of their personal suffering constituted a violation of boundaries.

The Destruction of Polish Books and Libraries

The possibilities of secret Polish education in the Warthegau were extremely limited, partly because no suitable books were available to those seeking to learn. Sometimes a group had only one book (Fig. VI.159), so that only one person from the group could work with the book at a time. Obtaining the books needed for the secret Polish study groups was a major problem. They made a special effort to save Polish books from confiscation and destruction in the shredder. [247] If photographic sources may be trusted in this regard, the secret autodidactic learning groups in Krotoschin were better equipped with books than those in Poznan (cf. Figs. VI.160-161). The Szare Szeregi built up a small, secret library in Poznan during the occupation.



Fig. VI.162: unknown photographer, a group of young Polish scouts during a break in their forced labor as construction workers. Second from left: Ryszard Nieborak. Poznan 1942. new print from old 6 x 6 cm negative (SSW X/6)

Since the German occupation forces confiscated and threatened to destroy all Polish books and libraries, they gathered as many books as possible from the libraries that still existed. Poles who worked in the waste paper collection centers at the paper mill notified others when they found books that might be suitable for clandestine education. Under conditions made more difficult by the high level of German control, an inconspicuous transfer of books required a great deal of organization; for example, a person would come to the waste paper collection point at an arranged time to have books thrown to him. At a book collection point from which the Polish books were to go to a paper mill to end up in the shredder, a teenage Polish scout “stole” several hundred books at once. From this stock, which was arranged thematically and expanded as far as possible, a small secret library of the Szare Szeregi in Poznan was created. [248]

The National Socialist cultural policy in the Warthegau also included the confiscation and destruction of all books and archival materials [249] in Polish possession. The confiscation of books did not take place with the same intensity as the theft of art, but it began already during the period of military administration and took place largely in secret during the years of occupational rule. On December 13, 1939, the *Ostdeutscher Beobachter* published a decree issued by the new Reich Governor Greiser, according to which all book collections and libraries in public and private ownership were to be reported and “secured”. In the course of the following months, more than 1,500 book collections in the Gau area were reported and brought to a book collection center set up especially for this purpose. Some other books went directly to the paper mills or were otherwise destroyed. In particular, book stocks outside Posen were not even transported to the Posen collection point, but were destroyed on site. The “*Ostdeutsche Landbewirtschaftungsstelle*” (East German Land Management Office), newly founded by the occupying power, dealt with the books it found on confiscated Polish estates in this way, for example. Of the library of the Poznan Society of Friends of Science (*Poznanskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk*), only 10% of the pre-war stock remained. The fact that Polish books of the interwar period were preserved in the Poznan University Library was due to the conservation goals of the then German library director, Dr. Alfred Lattermann (Fig. III.47). [250]

Responsible for the implementation of Greiser's decree of December 1939 was the provisional curator of the “*Reichsuniversität Posen*,” Dr. Hans Streit. In 1940, he set up a book collection center in Posen's St. Michael's Church (Sw. Michala) (fig. VI.163-164) and appointed Dr. Jürgen von Hehn, a former employee of the Herder Institute in Riga, as its director. In the profaned church, a total of about 3 million books were delivered without pre-selection, which were piled up in the main room in a stack about 50 m long, 6 m wide and up to 4 m high. There was also a similar pile of books in the basement of the church, which had been built on the foundations of a former brewery. Hehn, assisted by nine unqualified assistants, sorted out all the Polish books; they were processed into waste paper in a Poznan paper factory (*Poznan-Czerwonak*). The staff of the book collection center consisted – except for one Pole – exclusively of Germans and non-Polish foreigners. The books left behind after the sorting process were placed on the shelves without any system. In addition to St. Michael's Church, the book collection center used three other churches in Posen for storage. By the fall of 1940 alone, the Posen book collection center delivered 77,000 kg of Polish books to the paper mill. The books that were not destroyed were assigned to the various institutes of the Poznan “*Reichsuniversität*” that was currently being founded. In 1941, Jürgen von Hehn was replaced as head of the office by Heinz Müller, who aimed for a somewhat more careful handling of the books from Polish possession. Nevertheless, in the end, the majority of all Polish books collected were destroyed or ruined by improper storage. During one of the rare Allied air raids on Poznan on May 28 and 29, 1944 (Pentecost), St. Michael's Church was destroyed by bombing, along with the books stored in it. [251]

A large coeval paper print (Fig. VI.163) shows the Posen book collection center that had been established in St. Michael's Church. From an elevated vantage point, one overlooks a large,

very high room filled with narrow rows of bookshelves. In the upper right of the picture, one can see a wall with window inlets that can be identified as stained glass windows because of their shape. In the center of the room and on the right side of the wall are large piles of books heaped up. On the back of the large-format paper print is a handwritten note in pencil in German: “Buchsammelstelle Posen, Hauptraum, 1942.” The photographic image was probably taken using the pre-existing room lighting with a long exposure time. The light sensitivity of photographic film at the time did not permit snapshots to be taken indoors; indoor photographs required long exposure times and/or artificial lighting. The photographic images allow us to assume that the photographer was able to select a suitable shooting location in the church and take pictures at his leisure. The photographer's location and the unusually large size of the contemporary paper print suggest that the surviving image was made by a professional or semi-professional photographer for an official presentation purpose – perhaps for an internal administrative documentation or exhibition. The contemporary inscription on the reverse as “Main Room” indicates that there were other rooms. Another photograph without a caption in the same inventory shows another room with a low and barrel-vaulted ceiling, also containing shelves filled with books (Fig. VI.164). The photograph shows that the underground cellar vaults of the church also served as book storage.



Fig. VI.163: unknown photographer, „Buchsammelstelle Posen, Hauptraum, Zustand 1942“. Silver gelatin paper 21,5 x 29,8 cm (IZ Dok. IV-135/1)

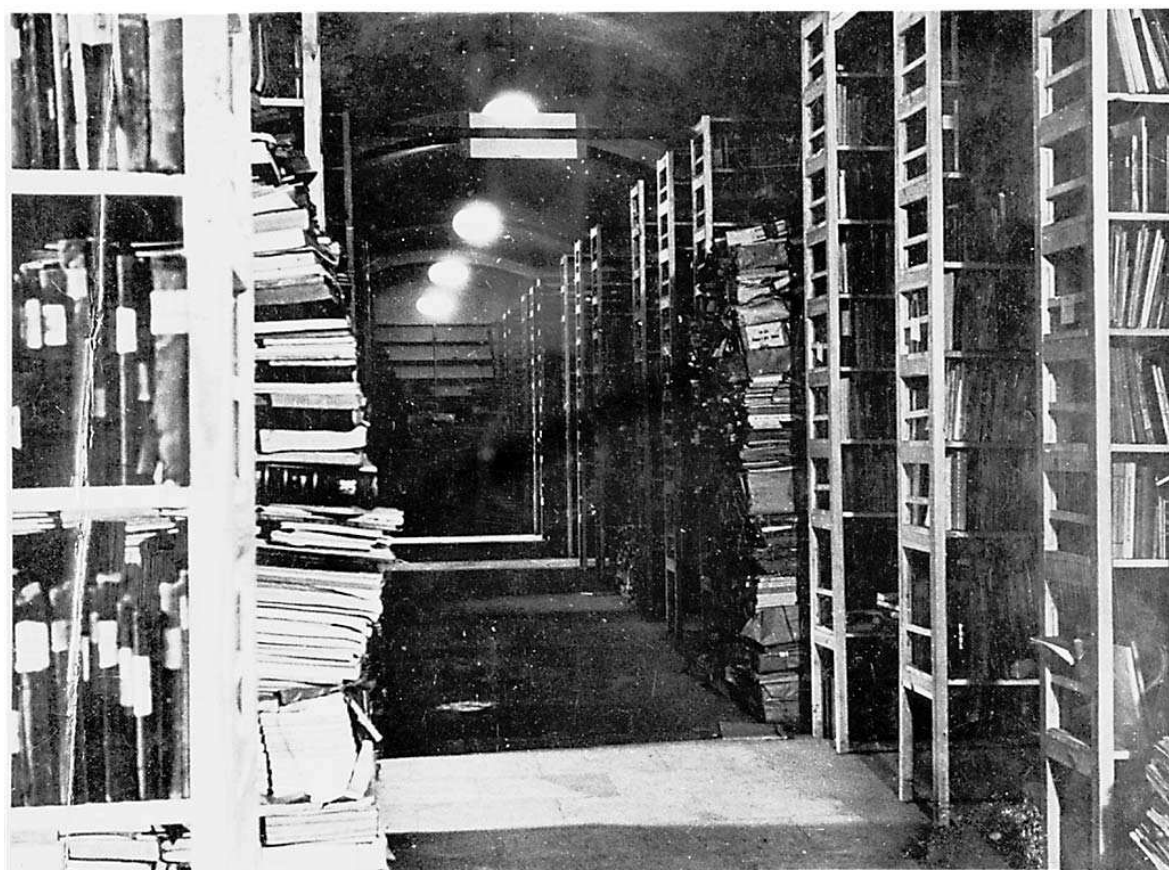


Fig. VI.164: unknown photographer, „Buchsammelstelle Posen – basement vault, Posen 1942“. Silver gelatin paper 21,6 x 29,5 cm (IZ Dok. IV-135/2)

Documentation and Foreign Information

As described in the chapter on press photography, the National Socialist occupational regime in the Reichsgau Wartheland only permitted a German press that had to comply with the specifications of the Reich Ministry of Propaganda [“Reichspropagandaministerium”] and the Gauleiter. All Polish publishers and printers had been closed and confiscated by the German occupation forces; Polish journalists could no longer legally work in their profession in the Reichsgau Wartheland. Since the Polish population had been banned from owning radios by the new rulers soon after the occupation of the area, the Szare Szeregi in Warthegau attempted to secretly listen to foreign broadcasts banned by the National Socialists (figs. VI.165-166). They then relayed the international news received over the radio in the form of simple underground journals (for example, sheets duplicated with matrices). [252] In addition, the Szare Szeregi in Poznań also organized the distribution of illegal periodicals, including *Polska Narodowa*; in connection with this, many links developed between the Polish Scouts and the *Narodowa Organizacja Bojowa*, i.e., the military wing of the nationalist-authoritarian underground organization *Stronnictwo Narodowe*. A large number of the Szare Szeregi in Poznań, however, apparently did not identify with this political group, but from the turn of 1939/40 participated in the underground organization *Ojczyzna*, which gathered the broadest

possible national camp based on Catholic ethics and had its center in the Wielkopolska region. [253]

Another very important field of work of the Szare Szeregi, apart from providing information about the events abroad and on the war fronts, was documentation, of which not much has survived. One of the first orders issued by the Commandant's Office of the Polish Scouts was to document the destruction of the Polish nation in the occupied territory. The Szare Szeregi in Poznan sent regular reports to the Commandant's Office of the Polish Scouts in Warsaw. Their reports on the crimes of the occupying forces were also sent to the representation of the Polish government-in-exile in occupied Poland. Some of the Szare Szeregi also engaged in military and economic espionage, i.e., they observed and documented army movements, transports, and weapon production as far as they could. In small towns, the Szare Szeregi specifically observed certain Germans or disseminated information among Poles about resettlements that were imminent in the near future. [254]

The Szare Szeregi in Poznan aimed at photographically documenting the destruction of Polish cultural assets and crimes against the Polish people. Their documentation project referred to a future use abroad: the documents of German crimes collected in occupied Poland were to be forwarded to the Polish government-in-exile in London via the Scouts' headquarters in Warsaw. In the Wielkopolska region, the Szare Szeregi pursued two strategies in photographic documentation: on the one hand, to take photographs themselves, and on the other hand, to reproduce the photographs taken by Germans. Since many Germans had their photographs developed in Poznan laboratories, where Polish lab technicians made the prints, this was the main source of photographs for the Szare Szeregi to document the crimes committed in Poland. The second source was photographs taken by themselves of the cultural destruction and crimes committed by the occupying forces. [255]



Fig. VI.165: unknown photographer, Szare Szeregi secretly listening to Polish-language broadcasts of Radio Toulouse and taking notes on the content. Obornik (Oborniki), April 1940. paper print in postcard format (SSW IV/1)

Of the more than 100 photographs shown in the exhibition “Szare Szeregi Wielkopolskie w zachowanych dokumentach 1939-1945”, 42 photographs were recorded for the present study. Of the recorded photographs, 24 had survived anonymously and 18 photographs could be assigned to identifiable authors from the Szare Szeregi circle [256]:

Karol Grzeskowiak [257],
 Zdzisław Kolodziejczak [258],
 Zygmunt Zuraszek [259],
 Mieczysław Knapski [260].

What security precautions the young Poles who had joined the Szare Szeregi took when photographing in the Reichsgau Wartheland emerged in part from the author's conversations with Mieczysław Knapski. Knapski took photographs only under great security precautions during the occupation, and he did so even before Poles in the Reichsgau Wartheland were officially prohibited from taking photographs. Knapski heard from his family that the possession and use of cameras was forbidden to Poles in 1941. It was reported that on Sundays in the Poznań Zoological Garden, the German police had taken away the cameras of all Polish visitors. Afterwards, notices were posted in the city asking Poles to turn in their cameras to the German police. Mieczysław Knapski did not hand in his cameras. In his estimation, most Poles in Poznań also did not turn in their cameras to the police. [261]



Fig. VI.166: unknown photographer, Szare Szeregi secretly listening to Polish-language broadcasts of Radio London and taking notes on their contents. Obornik (Oborniki), December 1940. paper print in postcard format (SSW IV/2)

Mieczyslaw Knapski usually took photos only when there were very few people on the street. It was safer for Poles to take photos in the places where there were no Germans. For example, Knapski photographed his friends often at a Catholic cemetery because it was visited only by Poles and not by Germans. In the summer, on Sundays, they made trips on foot to the river bank of the Wartha, about six to ten kilometers from the city; there were no Germans there either. [262]

When Mieczyslaw Knapski took photographs on the street in Poznan, he had two friends help him by covering him from both sides so that no one could see when he operated a camera. In this way he photographed the large Jewish labor camp Stadion in Posen (Fig. V.21), the conversion of a synagogue into a swimming pool (Fig. VI.63), and a prisoner-of-war camp for Frenchmen (Fig. VI.167). Based on the photographs alone, it cannot be reconstructed that the photographer brought in two other people for protection. [263] He was three to four meters away from the persons visible in the photograph of the Prisoner of War camp, and perhaps ten meters away from the camp entrance. The camp existed from about the end of 1940; it was disbanded in 1941. It was one of the provisional Prisoner of War camps set up by the German

Wehrmacht at the beginning and was located – near the present Warta Stadium – on ul. Bielnika, which no longer exists today. The French prisoners of war were used for earthworks on the bank of the Wartha river. [264]



Fig. VI.167: Mieczysław Knapski, POW camp for French prisoners of war at ul. Poznań, ca. 1940/41. New print from old negative (private property Mieczysław Knapski)

Mieczysław Knapski forwarded his photographs of the German Prisoner of War camp for Frenchmen to Warsaw. The Szare Szeregi regularly forwarded information about German activities in Poznań, including photographs, to their main command in the Generalgouvernement with the help of underground couriers. But communication between the Warthegau and the commandant's office in Warsaw was considerably hampered by the heavy police control of the Poles in the Wartheland; news from that area reached the headquarters of the Polish Scouts in the Generalgouvernement only sporadically. [265] An example of the documentation activities of the Scouts in the Warthegau and a successful flow of communication to London is a book publication entitled “Z pierwszej linii frontu,” edited in Warsaw in 1943 and published in Glasgow in the same year. The publication contains reports from Wielkopolska, including executions and expulsions; photographs were not published in this book. [266]

At least two photographs of a member of the Szare Szeregi in Posen were published in the second black book of the Polish government in exile in London. These are two photographs by Karol Grzeskowiak [267] of new signs in German-occupied Posen forbidding Poles to

enter certain spaces. Largely reproduced in full in the publication of the Government in Exile is a photograph by Grzeskowiak showing, very close up, a sign with the text “Playground for German Children Only” behind a barbed wire fence (Fig. VI.168). [268] The kindergartens and the playgrounds in the public areas of the city of Poznan were now to be reserved for German children alone, in accordance with the will of the German civil administration. [269] There were few designated children’s playgrounds at that time anyway, but now there were such signs at every playground in Posen. [270] German women with children came to the playgrounds and immediately chased away Polish children if they played there; German children also participated in chasing away Polish children. Mieczyslaw Knapski said that all Germans were so attuned that – as soon as they heard the Polish language – they asked, “What do you want here?” [271]



Fig. VI.168: Karol Grzeskowiak, Playground for Germans Only. Poznan, August 25, 1940. silver gelatin paper 6 x 9 cm (SSW III/1)

In particular, the further transmission route of the photographs forwarded by the Szare Szeregi from Poznan to the Generalgouvernement is unclear. The contemporary witnesses Aleksandra Markwitz-Bielerzewska and Mieczyslaw Knapski were not aware that at least two of Grzeskowiak's photographs from Poznan had been printed in the 1942 Black Book of the Polish government-in-exile, although they continued to research on the Szare Szeregi during the war years in their spare time in the early 1990s. Intermediates of the reproduction process of one of these photographs in the General Government were found in the archives of the Main Commission at the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw. [272]



Fig. VII.01: Oskar Fissel or Florian Maciejak (Atelier Fissel, formerly Maciejak): Two men of the NSDAP-SA with dog, Kosten (Koscian) 1939-1945. glass negative 10 x 15 cm (APP zespól 1424, sign. B 40-9)

Footnotes

[210] Cf. Pospieszalski 1946, p. 152; Serwanski 1970, p. 202; Madajczyk 1988, p. 33; Harten 1996, pp. 71-73, 86, 89, 97f., 170-172, 177.

[211] Cf. Serwanski 1970, p. 214; Harten 1996.

[212] Cf. Brenner 1963; Luczak 1966, p. 191; Serwanski 1970, pp. 211-213; Kater 1971; Röhr 1989, p. 46; Biuletyn GKBZHwP IV, 1948, pp. 175f.; DO XIII, Doc.VI-3 and VI-4, p. 187. On 21. September 1942, Gauhauptmann Robert Schulz reported to the Reichsstatthalter on the distribution of confiscated art and valuables within the Warthegau: he had formed a commission of German officials from the cultural administration, which had held meetings in accordance with this. Confiscated paintings and sacral art were stored in the Poznan Cathedral (Katedra Poznanska); ecclesiastical equipment made of metal was to be handed over to the non-ferrous metal collection for further use after an inspection by the Gau Conservator. Since the processing of the art and valuables seized and stored in Poznan from Polish ownership was now complete, Schulz and the commission he had formed could now set about reviewing the seized cultural property in other places in the Gau; see Doc. XIII, Doc. VI-43, p. 216; cf. Serwanski 1970, p. 212.

[213] Cf. Serwanski 1970, p. 202f.; Luczak 1966, p. 189f.

[214] Cf. Harten 1996, p. 171; Schwendemann 2003, p. 102.

[215] See Schwendemann 2003, p. 102; Harten 1996, p. 172.

[216] Cf. Zimniak 1983, pp. 244, 251-253, 257; Harten 1996, p. 172f.

[217] Conversations with Mieczyslaw Knapski on 7 Dec. 1994, 12 Feb. 1995, 2 July 1996; conversation with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and 24 June 1996; EKW, pp. 543-555.

[218] Conversations with Mieczyslaw Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996; conversation with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and 24 June 1996.

[219] Conversation with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and June 24, 1996.

[220] Conversations with Mieczyslaw Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996.

[221] Conversations with Mieczyslaw Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996. When taking outdoor pictures in smaller groups, part of the group positioned themselves in such a way as to obscure the view on the photographer and the camera (Cf. Fig. VI.52).

[222] See list of photographers in the appendix.

[223] See list of photographers in the appendix.

[224] See list of photographers in the appendix.

[225] See Madajczyk 1988, p. 345; Klattenhoff 1992, p. 37; Hansen 1994, pp. 130, 142, 434; Harten 1996, pp. 189-191, 200, 202, 205-208 and notes 47, 211.

[226] See Hansen 1994, pp. 187ff, 193ff; Harten 1996, pp. 203f.

[227] Cf. DO IV, p. 144; Harten 1996, pp. 215-218.

[228] Cf. Bossowski 1955; Serwanski 1970, pp. 46, 205-207; Majer 1981, p. 392; Madajczyk 1988, p. 343; Harten 1996, p. 201; Matelski 1994, p. 117; Luczak 1996, pp. 291f., 294, 296.

[229] Cf. Majer 1981, p. 392; Madajczyk 1988, p. 343; Matelski 1994, p. 117; Harten 1996, pp. 157f., 201; Luczak 1996, p. 296; Schwendemann 2003, p. 102f. The authors listed here do not establish the connection, evident in the author's opinion, in the history of ideas between the eugenic conceptual worlds at the beginning of the 20th century and the "Volkstumspolitik" towards the Eastern European peoples, but mainly describe the subjects taught at the university.

[230] Cf. Kalisch/Voigt 1961, p. 205; Matelski 1994, p. 117f.; Harten 1996, p. 157f.; Schwendemann 2003, p. 103.

[231] Cf. Kalisch/Voigt 1961, p. 205; Majer 1981, p. 392; Burleigh 1988, p. 292; Matelski 1994, pp. 114f. (proportion of women); Harten 1996, pp. 160, 169, 201; Luczak 1996, p. 297.

[232] Cf. DO V, pp. 62f.; Serwanski 1970, pp. 46, 203, 205; Majer 1981, p. 392; Madajczyk 1988, p. 333; Klessmann 1989, p. 119f.; Harten 1996, pp. 188-193. The details of the dismantling of the Polish school system in a small town in the Warthegau region after the Nazi occupation in 1939 can be reconstructed, for example, for the town of Rawitsch (Rawicz) from contemporary German sources; see Serwanski 1970, p. 204; Harten 1996, pp. 199f.

[233] Cf. DO XIII, p. 329; Klessmann 1989, p. 120f; Luczak 1990, pp. 239, 252, 322f, 329-333; Matelski 1994, p. 119.

[234] Himmler according to Klessmann 1989, p. 120.

[235] Cf. DO V, pp. 312ff; DO XIII, pp. 252, 329, 332; Boberach 1984, vol. 14, pp. 5470f; Harten 1996, pp. 192, 194f.

[236] Cf. Serwanski 1970, pp. 203-205; Klessmann 1971, p. 44; Majer 1981, p. 393; Madajczyk 1988, pp. 344f.; Klattenhoff 1992, pp. 36f.; Matelski 1994, p. 119; Nawrocki 1995, pp. 8, 13; Harten 1996, pp. 191-193, 195-197, 200f. Viktor Böttcher expressly ordered the use of unqualified personnel in the “Polish schools” on 17.9.1940, since the trained German teachers were to be reserved for the “German” pupils.

[237] See DO XIII, p. 329; Harten 1996, pp. 211-214. A December 1941 report by the Higher SS and Police Leader Warthe asserted that Poles could “camouflage” themselves better if they were fluent in German; language was the only “external difference between the two ethnic groups.”

[238] See Harten 1996, pp. 189-191.

[239] See Klessmann 1989, pp. 12, 123, 128f., 134; Madajczyk 1988, pp. 352, 347, 349; Nawrocki 1995, p. 18.

[240] Conversation with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and June 24, 1996; conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on Dec. 7, 1994, Feb. 12, 1995, July 2, 1996; see EKW, pp. 543-555; Nawrocki 1995, p. 17; Klessmann 1989, pp. 124f. The West German historian Christof Klessmann wrote that the quality of the secret lessons and of the examinations taken could not be judged by today's usual criteria because of the threat to the teachers of arrests and concentration camps, especially since the general living conditions of the Polish population did not exactly strengthen the will to study. However, in his estimation, those who took the risk of illegal teaching were consistently highly motivated, and in this sector of the Polish resistance, cases of denunciation were extraordinarily low; see Klessmann 1989, pp. 126ff.

[241] Interview with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and June 24, 1996; EKW, pp. 543-555.

[242] EKW pp. 343f.

[243] Conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7 Dec. 1994, 12 Feb. 1995, 2 July 1996.

[244] Nawrocki 1995, p. 15.

[245] Aleksandra Bielerzewska, *Szare Szeregi Wielkopolskie w zachowanych dokumentach 1939-1945*, exhibition concept Poznań 1994. Cf. EKW p. 377 (on Nieborak).

[246] Cf. Starl 1995.

[247] Conversation with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and June 24, 1996; conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on Dec. 7, 1994, Feb. 12, 1995, July 2, 1996.

[248] Conversation with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and June 24, 1996; conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996; EKW, pp. 543-555.

[249] For example, the German occupation forces confiscated the archives of all Polish occupational organizations and Catholic institutions. The Poznań State Archives suffered numerous losses. The "Reichsarchiv" newly established by the occupying power in Poznań, moved numerous archival records out of fear of Allied bombing raids in 1943/44: to Poznań churches, elsewhere in the Warthegau, and also to the Reichsgebiet. Cf. Luczak 1966, pp. 215-219; Serwanski 1970, pp. 208-210, 212; Rutowska 1984.

[250] Cf. DO XIII, pp. 187, 202f., 206, 216f., 323, 344f.; Machmann 1963, p. 78; Serwanski 1970, pp. 45, 208-210, 215-217; Rutowska 1984, pp. 56-64; Madajczyk 1988, p. 336; Röhr 1989, p. 47; Madajczyk 1970, vol. II, p. 123; Luczak 1990, pp. 187, 202, 206, 216f, 323, 334; Matelski 1994, pp. 116, 119; Nawrocki 1995, p. 8. In general, on library policy in Nazi-occupied Poland: Rapmund 1993.

[251] Cf. Kalisch/Voigt 1961, p. 192; Serwanski 1970, pp. 208, 215f.; Rutowska 1984, pp. 58, 61f., 69; Nawrocki 1995, p. 14f. Apart from St. Michael's Church, the following were used as warehouses of the book collection center in Poznań: a chapel at ul. Koscielna, the Sw. Stanisław Church in Poznań-Winiary, and the Sw. Małgorzata Church in Poznań-Srodka.

[252] Conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996.

[253] EKW, pp. 543-555; pp. 399-402 (on the "Ojczyzna" organization).

[254] EKW, PP. 543-555.

[255] Conversation with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and 24 June 1996. Not all Polish scouts who took photos were able to develop them themselves. In such cases, recourse was made to a liaison woman whom the Szare Szeregi had at Foto-Stewner, the largest photo house in Poznań.

[256] Aleksandra Bielerzewska, Szare Szeregi Wielkopolskie w zachowanych dokumentach 1939-1945, exhibition concept Poznań 1994.

[257] See list of photographers in the appendix.

[258] See list of photographers in the appendix.

[259] See list of photographers in the appendix.

[260] See list of photographers in the appendix.

[261] Conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996. Since Knapski took outdoor photographs after the ban on photography for Poland, he also got into a relatively dangerous situation once. In the spring of 1943, he was walking with friends through a forest to a nearby pond to take photographs. He had hung a camera with a long lens around his neck and the lens was peeking out the front of his coat. At a crossroads in the woods, they encountered a German Schupo. Knapski zipped up his coat in high anxiety, but the policeman took no offense at all with the group.

[262] Conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996. The movement radius of the Poles was very limited by the fact that they had to show an official permission to pass [“Passierschein”] in order to ride the trains. They were also forbidden to own bicycles and cars. This was another reason for their oftentimes long hikes.

[263] Conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996.

[264] Conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996. Later, larger, longer-term camps were established, which were not so close to the city.

[265] Conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996. Contact with Warsaw was maintained by Zygfryd Linda, after his arrest in 1943 by Edward Zürn; cf. EKW, pp. 543-555.

[266] Conversations with Aleksandra Bielerzewska in February 1995 and June 24, 1996; also EKW, pp. 543-555.

[267] Cf. list of photographers in the appendix.

[268] See Polish Ministry of Information 1942, pp. 410f. Fig. 109. The second picture by Grzeskowiak, in the present work Fig. IV.53, is also printed in the Black Book of the Polish Government in Exile – as a cropped enlargement – under the number Fig. 108.

[269] Cf. DO XIII, p. 335 (kindergartens); DO XIII, Doc. XIII-34, P. 374.

[270] See also IZ Doc.IV-24/3 (1 photo by Marian Olszewski: meadow with sign “Playground for German children only,” Poznań, ca. 1940).

[271] Conversations with Mieczysław Knapski on 7.12.1994, 12.2.1995, 2.7.1996.

[272] See IPN-AGK 4066A (positive) and 4066B (negative). Possibly these are enlargements of microfilm on paper. On the dispatch of photographs from Warsaw in the form of microfilm 1939-1945, see Arani 1997 with further references.

About the author

Miriam Yegane Arani did her doctorate at the UDK in Berlin under the supervision of the photo historian Prof. Diethart Kerbs. Her work focuses on the survey and analysis of photo-historical materials from the NS period. Her dissertation dealt with the Reichsgau Wartheland, where the Nazis implemented “exemplary” oppressive measures against the native Polish population. Similar methods were soon to be used in the old Reich territories in an increased dimension against the antagonized parts of the German, especially the German Jewish population. In the “Reichsgau Wartheland”, a German administrative unit newly formed from previously Polish territories after the military occupation, the Nazi regime realized its population and settlement policy plans for Eastern Europe in an exemplary manner.

Tierautonomie

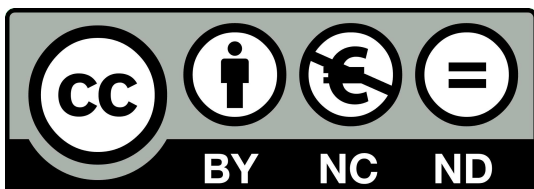
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Holocaust. The Photographs of the “Sonderkommando Auschwitz” 1944

Miriam Yegane Arani

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Tags: holocaust, genocide, national socialism, ns racism, photography, sociology

Editor’s note: The photographs of the “Sonderkommando Auschwitz” show a group of Jewish women who were to be led next into the gas chamber from a distance. The extent to which Nazi terror can be documented and represented in photographs becomes evident at the questions that have been raised at the example of these historical testimonials. The photos of the Sonderkommando document the last station of the German “administrative mass murder” in the death factory Auschwitz-Birkenau. They are the only photographs from a German death camp taken from the perspective of prisoners working on site.

Holocaust. The Photographs of the “Sonderkommando Auschwitz” 1944

Miriam Yegane Arani

The most famous crime of the Nazi dictatorship – apart from the unleashing of the Second World War – is the Holocaust. The former concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz, built by the SS in German-occupied Poland, became the central site of international remembrance of it. The industrial-scale murder of European Jews that proceeded here is considered by some to be unbelievable and by others to be unimaginable. Only in one case did Jewish victims of the Nazi extermination policy manage to secretly photograph moments immediately before and after people were murdered in a gas chamber. The authorship of these unique pictorial documents from Auschwitz-Birkenau was long attributed to Dawid Szmulewski. In the last decade, the view has prevailed that a Greek-Jewish prisoner named Alex is their author. Behind the story of the creation and transmission of the photographs lies an extraordinary group effort involving a large number of participants. After the war, the photos became the object of fundamental controversies about whether and how to deal with images of Nazi crimes.

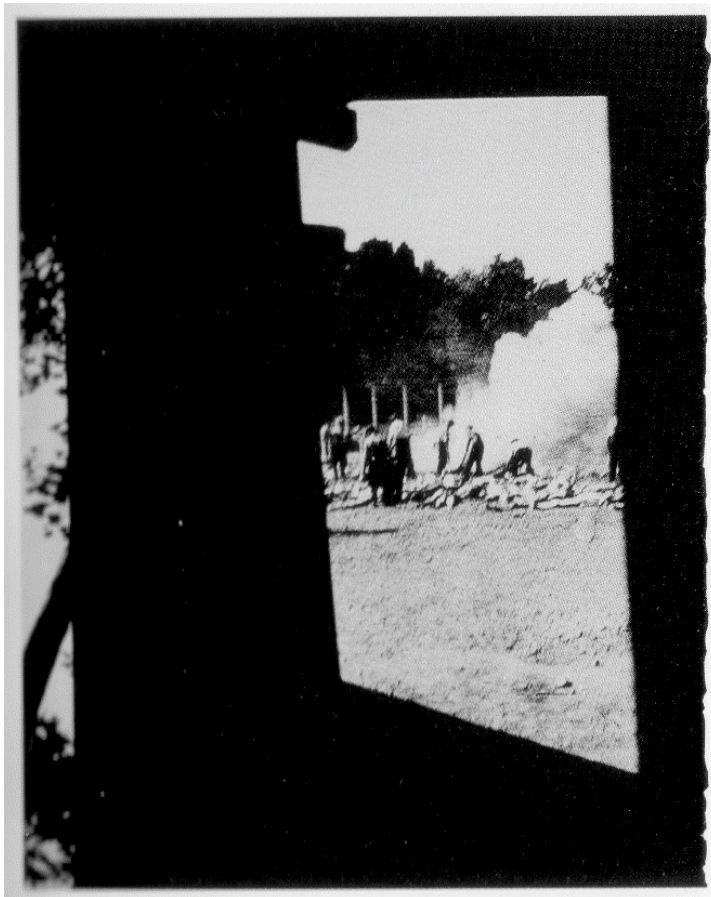


Fig. 1

Fig. 1: Secret photographs of Sonderkommando prisoners at Crematorium V in Auschwitz-Birkenau, shortly before 4.9.1944: Sonderkommando prisoners burning corpses in large pits in the open air. Contact copy from a 6 x 6 cm negative on 6.5 x 4.8 cm photographic paper. Probably 2nd image of the series of photographs.

Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu, Neg. No. 281

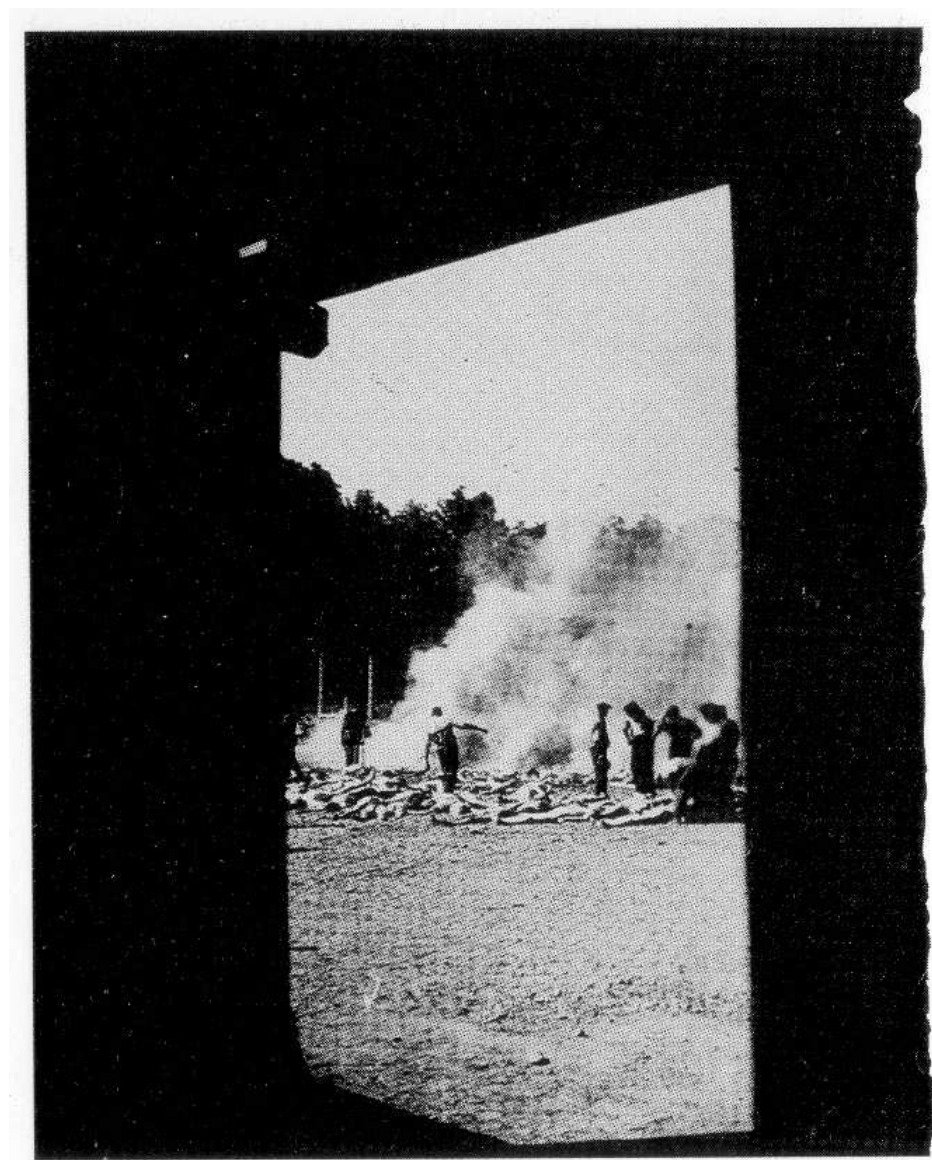


Fig. 2

Secret photographs of Sonderkommando prisoners at Crematorium V in Auschwitz-Birkenau, shortly before 4.9.1944: Sonderkommando prisoners burning corpses in the open air. Contact copy from a 6 x 6 cm negative on 6.5 x 4.8 cm photographic paper. Probably 1st picture of the series.

Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu, Neg. No. 281

Between doubt and curiosity

Proving the murder of European Jews was difficult because the SS had burned almost all written evidence of their crimes before the Allies arrived. But the results of decades of research are clear. Nevertheless, some consider the Holocaust to be implausible, including, initially, the Frenchman Jean-Claude Pressac. Full of doubts, he reviewed the sources on the Auschwitz concentration camp and was the first to deal scientifically with the photographs shown here. Pressac described the number and nature of the surviving photographs, located the places where they were taken, and attempted to reconstruct the context in which they were taken. By comparing the photographs with the surviving construction plans and ruins of the Auschwitz crematoria, he came to the conclusion that all four photographs were taken on the grounds of Crematorium V in the far northwest of Birkenau. The many trees in the pictures are an important clue to this, since only Crematorium V was surrounded by a "grove." A prisoner of the so-called Sonderkommando first took two pictures from the northern gas chamber of Crematorium V: They show other prisoners burning corpses in pits under the open sky. Then he took photos in the southeast of the fenced-in area around the crematorium and took two shots against the light towards the south.

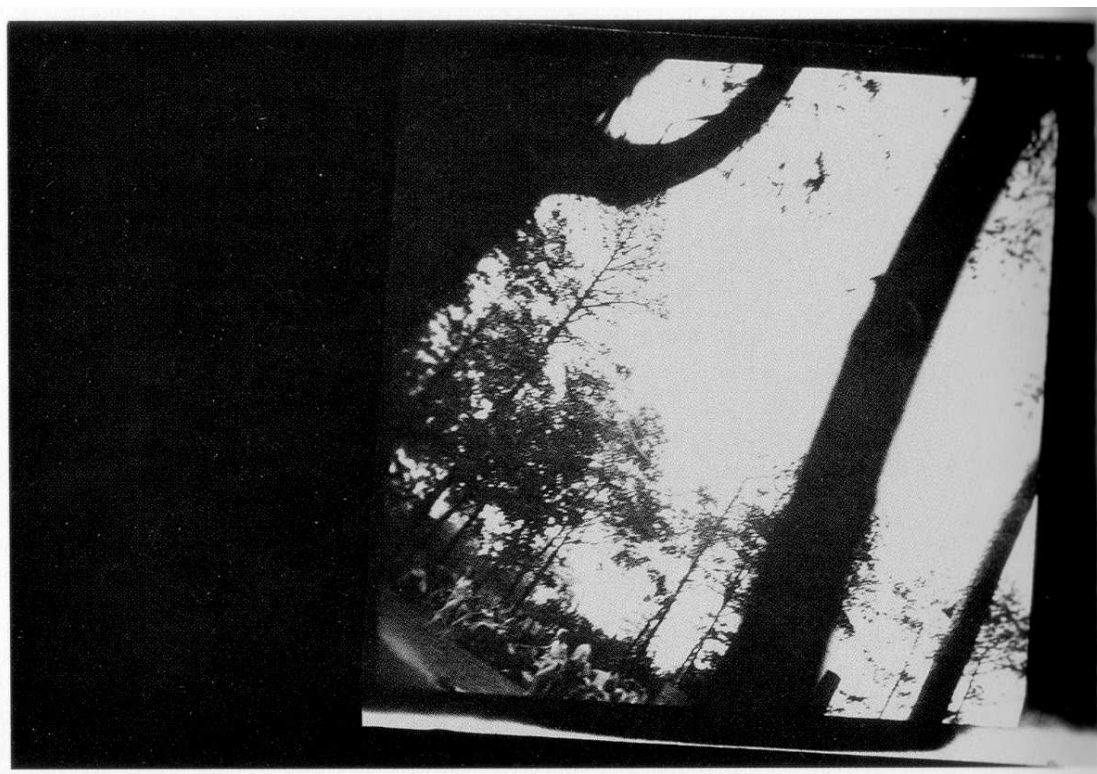


Fig. 3

Secret photographs of prisoners of the Sonderkommando at Crematorium V in Auschwitz-Birkenau, shortly before 4.9.1944: Jewish women destined for gassing undressing in the open air in the "little forest". Contact copy from a 6 x 6 cm negative on 6.5 x 9.5 cm photographic paper. Probably 3rd picture of the series. *Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu*, Neg. No. 282

One of these shots shows women undressing at a great distance. In the picture, some already undressed women run out of the group in the background to the front left, while the others are still undressing. Geographically, they are walking toward the east; the gas chambers of Crematorium V were outside the field of view to the west. The women in the foreground did not walk directly to the gas chamber. They walked around the clearing waiting, thinking they were about to take a bath.

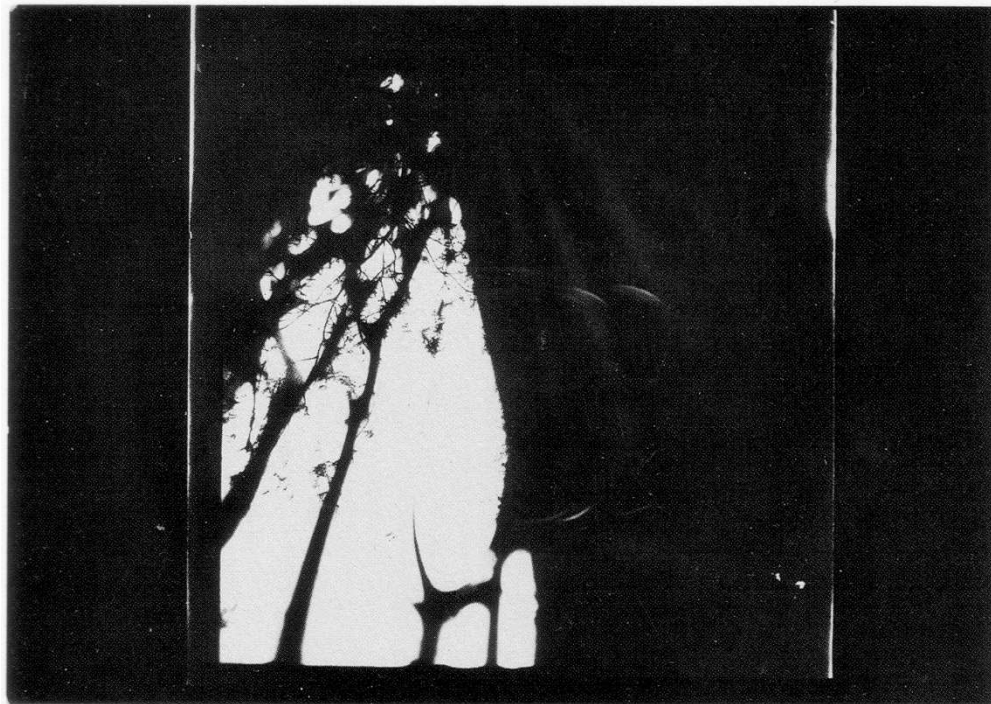


Fig. 4

Secret photographs of prisoners of the Sonderkommando at Crematorium V in Auschwitz-Birkenau, shortly before 4.9.1944: trees in the “grove” and an object in the foreground that cannot be precisely determined. Contact copy from a 6 x 6 cm negative on 6.5 x 9.5 cm photographic paper. Probably 4th image of the series of photographs.

Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu, Neg. No. 283

“Eye Work”

It is due to the survival skills of some prisoners in the Auschwitz concentration camp that any prisoner at all managed to take pictures of the top-secret events in Birkenau. Since 1940, the German executive had imprisoned tens of thousands of Poles as "political" prisoners in the new concentration camp. To avoid the many dangers, some of them deadly, that threatened them in the concentration camp, the Polish prisoners learned "eye work" – quickly observing their surroundings to see if SS men or prisoner functionaries were approaching.

The SS used the majority of the prisoners for hard physical labor. Those who spoke German well tried to get clerical jobs in the camp administration. They began to organize secretly and

occupied more and more key positions, which increased their chances of survival and those of other Poles in the "mordownia" (roughly: murdering). At the end of 1941, all Polish resistance circles in the Auschwitz concentration camp succeeded in uniting into an organization with a common leadership. Thus, the Poles gained unofficial primacy position among the inmates.

The Polish "political" prisoners were mistreated in the same way as the Jewish prisoners, but the Poles had better chances of survival because they could establish contacts with the outside world more easily. Since 1942, some of them were sent food to the camp. In contrast, the Jewish prisoners from different European countries, who were brought to the concentration camp in increasing numbers, usually had nothing in common except their religious affiliation and were not even allowed to send or receive letters.

Other pictures of Auschwitz prisoners

Photographs are not well suited to depict the experiences of concentration camp prisoners. Some survivors of the former concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz artistically processed what they experienced there. The drawings by Mieczysław Koscielniański provide an insight into the terrible everyday life of the prisoners. The paintings by David Olere convey the horrific experiences of the Jewish Sonderkommando.

The alleged author

What took place in German-occupied Poland could only be partially clarified by the law enforcement authorities in the Federal Republic of Germany after the war. From 1963 to 1967, trials against 22 former members of the SS staff of Auschwitz took place in Frankfurt/Main. During the investigation of the trials, Dawid Szmulewski, a Polish citizen, testified in German on July 13, 1961, how he had taken the two photographs that were published in 1957 in the book by the Polish examining magistrate Jan Sehn on the "Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Auschwitz-Birkenau) Concentration Camp" as Figures No. 31 and 35. Szmulewski testified that from the end of 1942 to November 1944 he had worked as an Auschwitz prisoner mostly as a roofer and had belonged to the resistance movement. From the latter, he had received a camera in the summer of 1944 to take pictures at the crematoria. Other prisoners had caused damage to the roof of the crematorium building so that he was allowed to enter the grounds for repairs. He had hidden the camera under his jacket and taken the pictures through a buttonhole; only two of the photographs had turned out to be usable. The resistance movement then smuggled them out of the camp with an accompanying letter.

The images in Jan Sehn's book are two enlarged sections of the Sonderkommando photographs. The scenery visible inside the door frame at the cremation pits was enlarged, the other parts of the picture field became "waste". The same happened with the shot of the women undressing in the "little forest". A section that is less than a quarter of the original negative was greatly enlarged and also retouched; the traces of the shooting situation that were visible in the complete image field were eliminated.

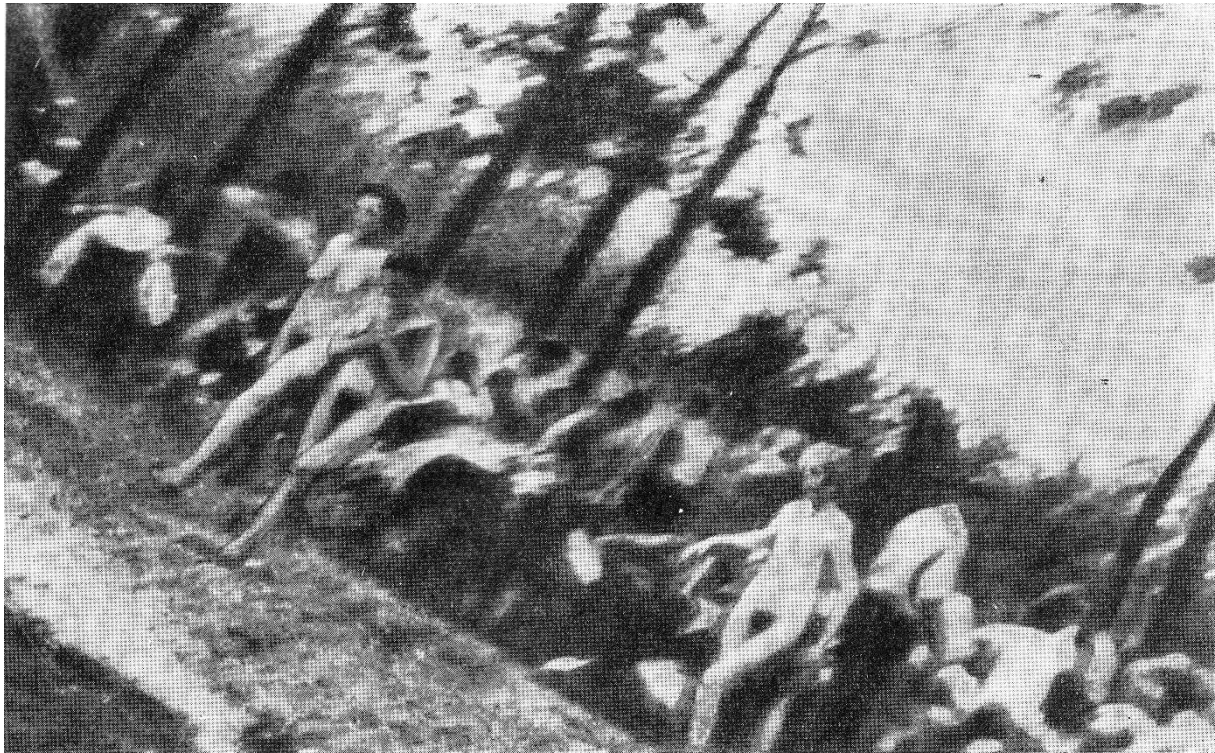


Fig 5. Retouched detail enlargement in Jan Sehn, *Konzentrationslager Oswiecim-Brzezinka*, Warsawa 1957.

Dawid Szmulewski's photographic heroic story seemed all too fantastic in terms of camera technology, since he would have had to have had a special device at his disposal for taking pictures through a buttonhole. But neither the Polish nor the German jurists were interested in the technical details of photography. Their attention was focused on the facts to be cleared up. Not only two photographs, but also a multitude of witness statements and evidence proved that crimes of the greatest magnitude had taken place.

Dawid Szmulewski stated in 1961 that the negatives of the photographs were in Poland; their whereabouts remain unclear to this day. Negative materials rarely survived the destruction caused by the war and the post-war turmoil in Poland. As early as October 1960, Wladyslaw Pytlik had given paper prints of the same photographs to the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, which former prisoners set up on the former concentration camp grounds soon after the end of the war. Pytlik had been an underground resister against German occupation policies during the war. He was among the leaders of the Polish Socialist Party, founded in 1940 in the mining town of Brzeszcze, which acted as a hub of underground contacts between camp inmates and Polish organizations in Krakow. Polish civilian workers assigned to the concentration camp and Polish prisoners working outside the camp secretly transported food, medicine, clothing, etc. into the concentration camp and prisoners' messages out. Pytlik reported in 1960 that he had received the negative film with the photos of the gas murders in Birkenau in 1944 via this courier service and had forwarded it to Krakow, where a number of

prints had been made. He himself fled from Brzeszcze to Kraków at the end of September 1944 to avoid arrest by the Gestapo.

While Szmulewski spoke of two “successful” photographs in 1961, Pytlik had given paper prints of three “successful” photographs to the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in 1960. These were two similar-looking but different photographs of the prisoners at the cremation pits and one of the women undressing in the “little forest.” They, too, were enlargements showing only part of the entire image field. The enlargement of the women undressing in front of the gas chamber had also been retouched in this case. The reason for this was not necessarily political: the images were adapted to the quality expectations and perceptual conventions of their viewers.

The retouchers made the blurred image of the doomed women more precise according to their respective ideas. The retoucher of the print for Jan Sehn’s publication emphasized above all the contours of the women in the foreground and supplemented their surroundings with additional lights and blacks. They appear very roughly “realistically” inked – with hanging breasts and partly distorted faces. In contrast, the retoucher of the paper print that was used as the print for the illustration in Gerhard Schoenberger’s book *Der gelbe Stern* (1960) remodeled the women’s bodies in the foreground. They appear as slender beauties with taut breasts and finely drawn faces.



Fig 6. Full-page combination of two detail enlargements in Gerhard Schoenberger *Der gelbe Stern. Die Judenverfolgung in Europa 1933 bis 1945*, Hamburg 1960.

The display of faceless, naked women in front of a gas chamber was obviously unimaginable for both retouchers. They turned a blurry shot that raised many questions into sharp images that promised to give an accurate answer, while at the same time being highly different.

Gestural traces

The complete image fields of the original photographs became available to the public only when Danuta Pytlik donated the contact prints of the original negatives to the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in 1985 after the death of her husband: There are seven contact prints from four different negatives. Two of them show the prisoners at the cremation pits. Only the contact copies reveal that these pictures were taken from a dark room through an open door. A third contact copy shows many trees and a very small group of women undressing in the “grove” at the bottom left of the picture. A fourth does not seem to contain anything in specific – a few trees photographed out of focus against the sky.

With the photographic films commonly used at the time, which had a light sensitivity of about 16° DIN, outdoor shots were only possible in good weather. The contact prints of the original negatives prove that the prisoner had to master various difficulties with the camera during the taking of the photographs. He moved extremely carefully on the grounds; under no circumstances was he to be seen. In order to photograph the other prisoners at the cremation pits, he hid in a room without lights, where he could operate the camera under the cover of darkness. He photographed the group of Jewish women who were to be led next into the gas chamber from a great distance. The entire image is distorted and spatially disoriented; the horizon line is no longer horizontal, but diagonal. Another shot with blurred tree trunks seems to have been triggered involuntarily. Presumably, parts of the clothing of another prisoner, who was protecting the photographer from the gaze of outsiders, have unintentionally entered the upper right of the picture.

The prisoner’s gestural trace, discernible from the contact prints, gives an idea of his precautions and his great restlessness when photographing in the open. The way he moved through the space testifies not only to the fear of the murderous terror of the SS, but also to the unconditional will to capture in the picture what happened in the crematoria of Auschwitz. The person who presumably still made the contact copies of the negatives at the end of 1944 used photographic paper in the format 6.5 x 9.5 cm as sparingly as possible for this purpose. The pictures taken from the dark room show a predominantly black surface and, not quite in the center, the scene at the cremation pits framed by the door frame. The person in the laboratory contact copied only about three quarters of the image field and placed the scene recognizable to her or him in the door frame in the center of the image on 6.5 x 4.8 cm photo paper, which she or he produced by dividing the 6.5 x 9.5 cm paper into two halves of equal size. With the pictures in the “little forest”, she or he could not immediately recognize the content of the picture as intended by the photographer. Therefore, she or he copied the entire negative image field onto the larger 6.5 x 9.5 cm photo paper in each case. These contact copies show the complete negative image field in the format 6 x 6 cm.

The probable originator

In 1985, the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum recorded a new statement about the origins of the photographs. A former Sonderkommando prisoner named Stanislaw Jankowski, alias Alter Feinsilber (also spelled Fainzylberg or Foincilber), testified in Polish that Dawid Szmulewski had not been the photographer of the photographs. There were differences of opinion between Feinsilber and Szmulewski, two former prisoners of Polish-Jewish origin, about the authorship.

Alter Feinsilber was assigned to Crematorium V from July 1943 until mid-January 1945. He reported that he was housed with other Jewish men of the Sonderkommando in Section B II d in Block 13, a closed block which they were only allowed to leave for work in the crematoria. A small group of them wanted to secretly take photographs of their forced labor at the gas chambers. This group included him, Szlomo Dragon and his brother, and a Greek Jew named Alex. Feinsilber said he obtained the camera, which already had a film in it, from Szmulewski and then smuggled it from Section B II d to the grounds of Crematorium V. Since he knew nothing about photography, he gave the camera to Alex – the only one of them who knew how to use a camera. The other three secured him while taking the pictures and kept a lookout for SS men. Even though Alex ultimately pressed the shutter, all of the Sonderkommando's inductees – including him and the Dragon brothers – participated in the creation of the four shots. Feinsilber said that he then smuggled the film from the crematorium grounds back to Section B II d and handed it over to Szmulewski. He had kept the camera and later buried it near the crematorium; he had already pointed this out during his first testimony in April 1945.

Various indications allow the assumption that the photos shown were taken with a vest pocket folding camera common at the time – such as the Agfa Billy or Balda Fixfocus. This type of camera used a 6 x 9 cm roll film. But it could also be used to take pictures in a 6 x 6 cm format, which was more economical in terms of film usage. The film usually ran from right to left on these cameras, so that on a developed negative strip, the first pictures taken are on the right and the last pictures taken are on the left.

The invisible web

Most of Feinsilber's statements complement statements by other former prisoners about the creation and transmission of the photographs to form a continuous storyline. Among the most important informants are the former prisoners Hermann Langbein and Stanislaw Klodzinski. In 1942/43, a small group of Austrian prisoners – among them Hermann Langbein – initiated the formation of an international, socialist-oriented resistance group with a meeting place in the prisoners' infirmary of the main camp. The Polish prisoner doctor Stanislaw Klodzinski and Dawid Szmulewski also belonged to this "Auschwitz Combat Group" or "Grupa Bojowa Oświęcim". By means of a secret courier network, the Poles transported documents about the crimes committed by the SS, as well as tiny, partly ciphered cassiber, out of the concentration

camp. In them they transmitted data collected by them about the number of prisoners, murders, arriving and departing prisoner transports, SS personnel, etc. to Poles in the area. Among the preserved cassibers is also a written note by Stanislaw Klodzinski about the photos he had taken on 4.9.1944. He wrote that he was sending along snapshots of the murder by gas in Birkenau to be taken to Krakow to Teresa Lasocka-Estreicher. He said they were shots of one of the places where bodies were burned when the capacity of the crematoria was insufficient. A place in the forest where people had to undress before being taken to the gas chamber could also be seen, he said. He emphatically asked for two more roll films in the format 6 x 9 cm, because there would be the possibility to take photographs. The camera was therefore – as Alter Feinsilber reported and Szlomo Dragon later confirmed in conversation with Gideon Greif – still available.

In August and September 1944, Klodzinski wrote almost daily to Teresa Lasocka-Estreicher, the driving force behind a Polish aid organization for Auschwitz prisoners (PWOK), which, among other things, provided medication for the camp inmates. Klodzinski had already written to her that on August 22, 1944, a transport consisting of 40 wagons with Jews from Lodz had arrived at the concentration camp, and that all of them had been murdered immediately. On 30.8. he wrote that at present transports with Jews from Lodz, Holland and Italy were arriving and would be gassed. On 6.9. he again reminded of the recently sent photos. As Hermann Langbein reported, Klodzinski also knew where the camera came from and how the film was brought from the concentration camp: Polish civilian worker Stanislaw Modarski smuggled the camera into the camp in a double-bottomed lunch pail. The film, exposed on the crematorium grounds, was hidden in a toothpaste tube in the main camp by Helena Daton, a Polish woman employed in the SS canteen, and brought out of the concentration camp to Brzeszcze.

For the “political” prisoners organized in the Kampfgruppe Auschwitz, establishing contact with the “Jewish” prisoners was extremely difficult. Szmulewski was a liaison between these two categories of prisoners created by the SS. He had been transferred from the main camp to Birkenau to Section B II d at the end of 1943 and worked in a detachment that was able to get to different places in the concentration camp and thus secretly connect different resistance circles. As a Polish-speaking representative of the Kampfgruppe Auschwitz, he established contact in Birkenau with members of the resistance circles in the Jewish Sonderkommando who spoke the same language and who had been planning an armed uprising since April 1944. Through him, the Sonderkommando prisoners asked the international resistance circle if they could get a camera to photograph the gruesome work they were forced to do by the SS. Since the outside world at the time did not believe the news of the Polish resistance groups about the mass extermination of Jews in Auschwitz-Birkenau, the group in the main camp supported the project. Szmulewski was to obtain photographs of the extermination in Birkenau.

Without the contact created by Szmulewski, the Sonderkommando prisoners would not have been able to smuggle the unique photos out of their shielded world of the crematoria. Some of them buried reports and letters on the crematorium grounds in the hope that traces would be

searched there later. After the war, seven canned manuscripts of Jewish prisoners of the Sonderkommando were found during targeted excavations.

As Feinsilber's statements show, none of the Polish Jews in the Sonderkommando who were privy to the plan knew how to use the camera. In what language they communicated with Alex from Greece is unknown. Feinsilber testified in 1945 that he knew seven languages. None of them could have taken and delivered these photos alone. But the resulting network of Polish resistance groups, Polish Jews and a Jewish Greek succeeded in laying a photographic trail to that which is so difficult to grasp and convey linguistically: the extermination of more than a million people as if on an assembly line.

Public displays

The first prints of enlarged sections of individual photographs of the Sonderkommando in Poland can be traced back to the mid-1950s in legal publications. They were presented as evidence of Nazi crimes in Poland. In 1959, an illustrated book entitled *1939-1945: We Have Not Forgotten* was published in Poland, translated several times and addressed to a mass audience worldwide. It presents numerous photos of physical acts of violence committed by uniformed Germans against Polish civilians. Among them is a retouched enlargement of the photograph of the women in front of Crematorium V.

Poland's international publicist objection to oblivion was directly related to the impending statute of limitations for Nazi crimes in the Federal Republic and the change in the approach to legal investigations in this regard since 1958. Since the secret protocol to the 1950 Goerlitz Agreement prohibited Poland from taking action against Nazi criminals living in the GDR, the Polish government aimed to prosecute perpetrators living in West Germany. Publicistic attacks on the Federal Republic coupled with anti-imperialist propaganda were opportune in the Soviet sphere of influence. And unlike in the Federal Republic, some of the former Auschwitz prisoners held high state offices in Poland, above all Jozef Cyrankiewicz.

In West Germany, the photos of Nazi crimes from Poland were usually only reluctantly acknowledged and branded as communist propaganda. The almost ritualized defamation of "Polish" sources was broken by Gerhard Schoenberger, who presented numerous photos from "Eastern Bloc" archives in his illustrated book *Der gelbe Stern (The Yellow Star)*, published in 1960, including two cropped enlargements of the Sonderkommando photos. For the first time, Schoenberger visually conveyed to a broad audience the stringency with which the Nazis had persecuted and murdered the religious minority of Jews in Europe.

Since the 1960s, the Nazi crimes in the German-occupied East, which were taboo in West Germany, were increasingly reduced to the crimes against Jews and to Auschwitz as a symbol of unspeakable events. In the Federal Republic, "Auschwitz" took on a life of its own and became an imaginary construct, illustrated with photographs that did not reveal any physical violence against the persecuted (> TORHAUS AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU). Only the

American television film Holocaust, which was broadcast in West Germany in 1979 and also showed photos of the Auschwitz Sonderkommando, made the crime somewhat more comprehensible from the perspective of the victims.

Georges Didi-Huberman on the significance of the photographs:

“The four photographs [...] address the unimaginable, as which the Shoah is so often seen today, and they refute it in a tragic way. [...] The four photographs taken by the members of the Sonderkommando are nothing more than ‘moments of truth’ – no more than four glimpses of the summer of 1944. But these moments are invaluable, because they are almost ‘all (of the visible) that we have in this chaos of horror’.”

In France, where Clement Cheroux and Georges Didi-Huberman presented the four pictures of the Sonderkommando in an exhibition of photos from German concentration camps in 2001, some critics vehemently polemicized against their public display. They said that the Holocaust was unimaginable and therefore could not be depicted in pictures. This dogmatic hostility to images is contrasted by various attempts to clarify more precisely the extent to which Nazi terror can be documented and represented in photographs.

The photos of the Sonderkommando document the last station of the German “administrative mass murder” in the death factory Auschwitz-Birkenau. They are the only photographs from a German death camp taken from the perspective of prisoners working on site. They are of utmost importance for the visual memory of the industrial murder of Europe’s Jews in German-occupied Poland. Their context of origin and transnational distribution show that these images fulfilled a transnational function from the very beginning and became part of the visual universe of democratic industrial societies.

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About the author

Miriam Yegane Arani did her doctorate at the UDK in Berlin under the supervision of the photo historian Prof. Diethart Kerbs. Her work focuses on the survey and analysis of photo-historical materials from the NS period. Her dissertation dealt with the Reichsgau Wartheland, where the Nazis implemented “exemplary” oppressive measures against the native Polish population. Similar methods were soon to be used in the old Reich territories in an increased dimension against the antagonized parts of the German, especially the German Jewish population. In the “Reichsgau Wartheland”, a German administrative unit newly formed from previously Polish territories after the military occupation, the Nazi regime realized its population and settlement policy plans for Eastern Europe in an exemplary manner.

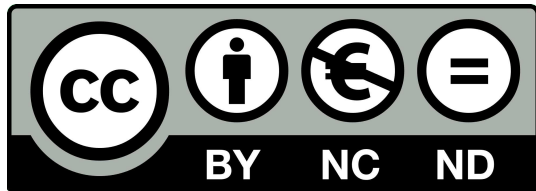
Tierautonomie

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Ein Nachruf auf Dr. phil. Karen Davis.
Begründerin der Tierrechts-Pressure-
Group 'United Poultry Concerns' (VA, USA)

Gita Marta Yegane Arani

Hühner und Schimpansen: Das seltsame
Paar der Tierrechtsbewegung

Dr. phil Karen Davis

Schlagworte: Tierrechte, Tiersoziologie, Karen Davis, United Poultry Concerns, Farmtiere, Speziesismus, Antispeziesismus

Ein Nachruf auf Dr. phil. Karen Davis. Begründerin der Tierrechts-Pressure-Group ,United Poultry Concerns‘ (VA, USA)

Gita Marta Yegane Arani

Die Tierrechtsbewegung hat eine große Pionierin verloren, eine Streiterin für den gerechten Blick auf das Tiersein, das dem menschlichen industrialisierten, ritualisierten, pastoralen, wissenschaftlichen, kulturellen und schlichtweg gesamtgesellschaftlich operierenden Faunazid ausgeliefert ist.

Davis‘ Sicht auf das ethische- und ökopolitische Konfliktfeld zwischen einem ökofeministischem Antispeziesismus, auf der einen Seite, und einem Chauvinismus unter den Verteidigern von Ideen hierarchischer, vermeintlich ökozentrischer Varianten von Jäger- und Sammlergrößenwahnsinn, auf der anderen, hat uns besonders deutlich die Wiege dessen vor Augen geführt, von dem was uns heute so eklatant in den ökotechnologischen Ansätzen begegnet, die eine sprachliche Kälte gegenüber der Tierfrage aufweisen (man muss sagen, heute selbst trotz möglicherweise zeitgleich bestehendem Veganismus), und dass wir es in dem Gedankengut, dass aus der Deep Ecology-Bewegung rührte, mit konservativen Verfechtern eines höchst radikalen kulturellen Basisspeziesismus zu tun haben.

Für ihre Herangehensweisen wurde Davis inhaltlich auf subtile, aber leider auch konsequenzreiche Weise in ihrer Rolle als Antispeziesistin angegriffen, und so musste sie den gleichen herausfordernden Kampf kämpfen, den so viele Streiter für Rechte immer wieder und in beinahe ähnlicher Weise durchkämpfen müssen: der Mensch trifft auf das überwältigende Unverständnis seiner Zeit und unter der Mehrheit seiner Mitmenschen.

Anlässlich des Scheidens aus dieser Welt von Dr. phil. Karen Davis veröffentlichen und archivieren wir nunmit unseren dritten überarbeiteten Publikationsbeitrag, in dem wir Artikel von Davis der deutschsprachigen Leserschaft vorstellen.

Folgende Materialien aus den von uns übersetzten Beständen hatten wir bislang archiviert gehabt:

- 1.) Karen Davis: Wie ein Huhn zu denken: Farmtiere und die feminine Verbindung. In: TIERAUTONOMIE (Sonderedition), Jahrgang 2, Nr. 1, ISSN 2363-6513, 2015. <https://d-nb.info/1210905973/34> [Zugriff 05.11.2023]
- 2.) E-Reader: Gruppe Messel, Jahrgang 4, Nr. 5, 2022, ISSN 2700-6905. Tierobjektifizierung und Fiktion (1). Karen Davis: Die Würde, Schönheit und

Misshandlung von Hühnern: Als Symbole und in der Realität, S. 10. <https://d-nb.info/1261136810/34> [Zugriff 05.11.2023]

Weitere ältere Übersetzungen von Artikeln von Davis, die ich mit ihrer Erlaubnis und Zustimmung in den frühen 2000ern anfertigte, befinden sich noch in unseren zu überarbeitenden Textbeständen. Der folgende Themenkomplex, dem sich Davis in dem hier veröffentlichten Text nun zuwendet, ist unserer Meinung nach aktuell und von unserem erarbeiteten Standpunkt her betrachtet, nicht unkommentiert zu reproduzieren.

So wird diese Form der Textveröffentlichung von einer normalen Übersetzung abweichen und ein im Text kommentierter Beitrag werden. Ein Text im Text, und zwar im Übersetzungstext, quasi. Die Kommentierung ist deutlich als solche erkennbar.

Zum einen wählen wir diese vielleicht ungewöhnliche Option um Missverständnissen und falschen Unterstellungen vorzubeugen, und zum anderen um einige von Davis' Ansätzen nochmal mit unserem Vokabular zu vertiefen und antispeziesistisch, tiersoziologisch und anti-tierobjektifizierend nochmals zu ergänzen oder zu klären.

Dr. Karen Davis war gezwungen in ihren Darlegungen über die Hierarchisierungen von Säugern, Primaten und warmblütigen Wirbeltieren, den Vögeln in dem Fall, innerhalb der Tierrechtsbewegung der 1980er (trotz Ryders Begriff des Speziesismus) und der Gesellschaft, sich argumentativ in Segregationsfeldern zu bewegen, was kulturelle Aspekte und Debatten über die Verschiedenartigkeit von Physiologien anbetrifft.

Agierend als ‚pressure group‘ konnte Davis mit der von ihr begründeten Gruppe, den United Poultry Concerns, sich zu der Zeit den „Luxus“ eher nicht leisten, der Vielheit der Tierwelt und dem Speziesismus in einem Zuge begegnen zu können – wenn sie besonders die Rolle, die Menschen im Speziesismus gegenüber denjenigen Tieren, die Menschen abwertend als „Geflügel“ (Poultry) objektifizieren, mildern und letztendlich aufbrechen wollte. Davis legte sich in ihren Kampagnen mit religiösen Riten, sowie der Industrie, sowie den allgemeingesellschaftlichen Speziesismen an.

Ich kommentiere hier lediglich um Lücken zu füllen, die sich nicht aus Davis' denken und grundsätzlichem Ansatz ergeben, sondern aus der Rolle, die sie im direkten Aktivismus als Pressure Group, sich in der Schnittmenge zwischen Tierrechten und Tierschutz bewegend, einnehmen musste quasi. Sie machte deutlich, dass auch kleine Veränderungen Veränderungen sind, und dass so das Thema des sprichwörtlichen Eisens, dass als Pressure Group geschmiedet werden will, heiß bleiben kann.

Dabei muss man hervorheben, dass Davis in ihrer Arbeit nicht bloß auf den Missstand im Missstand hinwies, wie es in der Richtung einer apologetischen Haltung in den Tierrechten gehen kann – in dem zwar Gewalt, aber nicht Mord und Unrecht im Fokus stehen – nein Davis arbeitete auch, mit verschiedenen anderen Akteuren gemeinsam, an der gemeinschaftlichen Sache, gegen die „artgerechte“ Idee / im Englischen als humane farming

bezeichnet, einzutreten: welche eine verzerrende „Tierwohl“-Rhetorik als kompensierende Farce eingesetzt hat; während durch implizit angeprangerte Missstände aber gleichwohl die Todesmaschinerie als Akt also, an sich relativiert wird.

Eine besondere Schwierigkeit war für mich mit den folgenden Text – der in ein anderes Fahrwasser rutscht, durch das dort erwähnte speziesistische Argument Singers, das einen Ableismus auf anderer Seite gleichzeitig bedient – das sich im Text ergebende Missverständnis zu versuchen zu klären.

Davis deutet das Problem an. An dieser Stelle nun übersah sie zwar gewiss nicht das Singers Argumente ärgerlich und viel zu ‚gehyped‘ sind in der Tierbefreiungsgeschichte, aber sie übersah, dass Ableismus sich als eine Diskriminierungsform im ‚rebound‘ mit Rückeffekt zum Speziesismus verhält, selbst wenn beides verschiedene Belange sind.

Spezifischer hier: wenn wir den Geist bei Menschen in der Art betrachten, wie Singer und andere begrenzt hinterfragt in Bezug auf kognitiv-intellektuelle Be-Hinderungen es tun, dann betrachten wir das Wesen des Geistes „soundso“ [ich glaube, das ist jetzt nicht weiter hier auszuführen], und dann werden wir auch eine Welt des „freien Geists“ nicht sehen, in der dann auch Tiere wiederum ihre freien Geister bewegen und eben nicht nur vom Menschen abhängig sind und von dessen Erkenntnissen. Es geht um Definitionshoheiten über Fragen die das anbetreffen, was „Geist“ überhaupt ist. Ein Übergriff auf die Erkenntniswelt von Tieren – der sich hier aus der Verbindung zweier unterschiedlichen Diskriminierungsformen ergibt, findet ja erst durch die Negierung von Tieren statt (was gleichbedeutend ist mit der geistigen und anderweitig objektifizierenden Abwertung von Tieren seitens der Menschen).

Kinder und Menschen mit kognitiven Be-Hinderungen, und diese mit anderen-als-menschlichen Tieren/Nichtmenschen gleichzusetzen, wie Singer es tut, ist für beide Seiten der existenziellen Identitäts- und Seinsspektren in besondere Weise gleichzeitig falsch – und dies nicht aus dem Grund den Davis anführt, weil man somit Tieren eine Reife und ihre Kompetenzen abspricht; was eine Argumentation ist, die meiner Meinung nach gleichermaßen zu Lasten der involvierten menschlichen Seite geht, aber auch vermutlich kaum im sozialen allgemeinen und (wenn es denn sein muss phänomenologisch proto-) politischen Interesse der Tierheit und Tierwelt vermutlich liegt, so wie ich Tiere kennenlernen, in ihrer Größe als Animal Sapiens.

Kinder werden positiv aber vielleicht auch nicht immer ganz fair gesehen. Ein zu langes Thema als dass ich es hier näher erörtern könnte, welches zu beginnen oder kurz zusammenzufassen allein etwas schwierig ist, weil sich wirklich viele Probleme an das Thema Mensch und Kindheit binden.

Das Thema Behinderung, und gerade das Mentale anbetreffend, ist eines ‚meiner Menschenrechtsthemen‘, die ich aktivistisch als Tierrechtler aus meiner Warte adressiere – und so kann ich an dieser Stelle sagen, dass der Fehler bei Singer liegt, denn er trifft hier eine implizit abwertende Eingangsaussage über Menschen mit Behinderung, und das zugleich auf

Kosten von nichtmenschlichen Tieren. Die Abwertung liegt in der eingeschränkten Sichtweise auf Fragen des Geistes, um es kurz zu sagen.

Singer postuliert eine reduktive Sicht, die er hiermit über sowohl Menschen als auch Tiere äußert. Ich glaube, diese wechselseitigen Konnotationen sind für jeden hier in deren „Gleichsetzungen“ und denen sich daran anschließenden „Logiken“, betreffend beider Seiten, in deren (in den möglichen Konsequenzen unsäglichen) Implikationen erkennbar:

Einfach gesagt: 1.) Tiere seien „doof“ und 2.) nach dem heutigen medizinischen Modell sprechen immernoch viele von „geistig“ behindert, was soviel heißt wie der Geist könne „behindert sein“ – Geist und Gedanken frei? – was heißt, Menschen, die auf intellektueller Ebene marginalisiert werden können ... seien auch irgendwie „doof“, dass man sie ja mit den im Prinzip hier für doof dargestellten Tiere (die eh geistlos seien vermutlich) gleichsetzen könne auf irgendeiner defizitären Gemeinschaftsebene im Vergleich zu Wesen, die „intelligenter“ seien [...]. Ein Perpetuum mobile, das Speziesismus und Ableismus bedient, nicht weil beides gleich ist, sondern weil beides ein Herabsetzungsmöglichkeit in der Form eben so darstellt.

Die Hierarchien, die wir in allem möglichen Belangen anwenden, versucht Davis im Punkte Vögel und eben besonders ihres „Geflügels“ aufzubrechen. Manche nahmen ihre die Verwendung des Wortes Poultry übel. Sie hat es aber geleistet, klar zu machen, das Poultry eben eine Bezeichnung der Diskriminierung ist. Das dies ein Titel des abwesenden Referenten ist, den Davis praktisch sichtbar macht in Worten und Taten, und in ihrem Erbe an uns alle.

Ich erlaube mir meine Kommentierung in dem Text, in farblich abgesetzter Weise, als Anmerkungen – die ich zur Kontextualisierung mit einer antibiologistischen und nicht-objektifizierenden Tiersoziologie für unverzichtbar halte – einzufügen. Eine Vorgehensweise für ein Thema und die daran angliedernden Themenfelder, die sich unumgänglich in einem Arbeitsprozess befinden müssen.

Hühner und Schimpansen: Das seltsame Paar der Tierrechtsbewegung

Von Dr. phil. Karen Davis, United Poultry Concerns (UPC), Mai 2001

Titel des Originals: 'Chickens and Chimpanzees: The Odd Couple of the Animal Rights Movement'. Übersetzung aus dem Amerikanischen: Gita Yegane Arani. Mit der freundlichen Genehmigung von United Poultry Concerns, USA. Dieser Artikel erschien in seiner englischen Originalfassung im Mai 2001 in Satya (S.16-17). Satya war von 1994 bis 2007 bestehendes monatlich erscheinendes Magazin, das den Vegetarismus, den Environmentalismus, die Tierverschutz und soziale Gerechtigkeit unterstützte und förderte. Die damalige Kontaktadresse der Zeitschrift lautete: P.O. Box 138 Prince St. Station, NYC 10012. Tel: 212-674-0952. Webseite: www.satyamag.com ; die Herausgeberin war Catherine Clyne.

Lassen Sie mich damit beginnen zu sagen, dass ich die Privilegierung irgendeines spezifischen Säugetieres oder Vogels im Kampf für Tierrechte ablehne. Es ist im Wesentlichen aus diesem Grund, warum ich dem ‚Great Ape Project‘ mit seiner Forderung für eine „Erweiterung Gleichberechtigter zur Einschließung aller Menschenaffen“ (Paola Cavalieri and Peter Singer, The Great Ape Project, 1993) ambivalent und ein wenig verärgert gegenüberstehe. Bitte verstehen Sie mich nicht falsch. Ich möchte dass die Menschenaffen legale Rechte haben, das steht absolut außer Frage. Jedoch warum sollten Schimpansen, Gorillas und Orang-Utans eine Bevorzugung in Sachen Gerechtigkeit erhalten? Ich weiß bereits die Antwort – ich habe sie tausendmal gehört: Weil sie „mehr wie wir“ sind. Weil sie 99 Prozent unserer Gene teilen. Weil sie die Tür für andere Spezies öffnen, um immerhin hineinzukriechen, hineinzuschleichen oder hineinzulunzen. Dass man irgendwo beginnen muss ist klar, so dass, ich stimme dem zu, das „hineinkriechen und - schlüpf“-Argument einem am vielversprechendsten erscheint. Dennoch ...

Trotz all der Aufmerksamkeit die sie erhalten haben, werden die Menschenaffen von ihren führenden Verteidigern schamlos von oben herab betrachtet, die sie unlogischer- und unfairerweise mit den am wenigsten kompetenten Mitgliedern der menschlichen Gesellschaft vergleichen: mit Kleinkindern und den mental Behinderten [A.d.Ü. 1, ein Vergleich – der seitens der Animal Law, d.h. juristisch und legalistisch gemacht wird, teils in philosophischen Argumentationen über Moralfragen und Recht – der uns bekannt ist von den Tierstudien, und der von dem Mainstream der Tierrechtsbewegung vor diesem Hintergrund betrachtet auch mitgetragen wird und wohl paradoxerweise „teilweise“ unhinterfragt stehen gelassen wird, wobei in Realität hier eine Überschneidung von speziesistischen und tierobjektifizierenden sowie ableistischen Herabwertungsweisen stattfindet (Davis bezieht sich in diesem Text nur auf den Speziesismus und rührt das Ableistische in der Argumentation nicht an; Davis schrieb in ‚The Rhetoric of Apology in Animal Rights‘ (1994), ‚Die Rhetorik des Entschuldigens in

den Tierrechten: Einige Punkte zum Bedenken‘ (https://simorgh.de/davis/davis_39-57.pdf , Zugriff 08.11.2023) – in dem sie den gleichen Punkt solch eines Negativ-Analogismus zitiert und vom primär antispeziesistischen Blickpunkt her kritisiert, dass man sich nicht gleichzeitig auf alle Themen konzentrieren könne, bedauerlicherweise aus Zeitgründen: „Als Individuen und Gruppen können wir nicht die gleiche Zeit auf jede Kategorie von Ungerechtigkeit anwenden“ und hob zugleich aber auch die Wichtigkeit hervor, die Beziehungen zwischen den verschiedenen Unrechtsformen zu adressieren]. Ihre Verteidiger argumentieren anthropomorphistisch, dass die Menschenaffen mentale Verhaltensweisen gezeigt haben, die denen menschlicher mentaler Verhaltensweisen am stärksten gleichen, während sie es versäumen hervorzuheben, dass solche Demonstrationen von anatomischen und physiologischen Ähnlichkeiten – so wie von Fingern und vokalen Mechanismen – abhängig sind, und die wissenschaftliche „Interpretation“ viel stärker vereinfachen als zum Beispiel Flossen, Flügel, Vogelklauen und nicht-affenartige Mechanismen der Vokalisation. Es basiert auf humanzentrischen Kriterien, dass die Menschenaffen somit vorgeführt werden, als dass sie einen ersten Versuch dabei verdienen einen Platz eingeräumt zu bekommen, so etwa neben und etwa etwas weiter unter uns, auf einem klein bisschen Land, das Semipersonen zugestanden wird.

Wie die Vogelforscherin Dr. Lesley Rogers in ihrem Buch ‚Mind of Their Own‘ in Bezug auf das ‚Great Ape Project‘ sagt, „sagen wir, indem wir die Grenze dahin verschieben, um Menschenaffen in dieselbe Gruppe wie die Menschen zu lassen immernoch, dass einige Tiere gleicher sind als andere.“ In der Tat, warum sollten andere Wesen ihre „Berechtigung“ auf „Personenschaft“ „beweisen“ müssen? Und welche weiteren Qualen werden sie in unseren Händen erleiden müssen und für wie viel länger, so dass wir vielleicht oder vielleicht auch nicht diesen „Beweis“ aus ihnen heraus extrahieren?

In einem Artikel den ich schrieb mit dem Titel „Expanding the Great Ape Project“ [Das Great Ape Project ausweiten, siehe weiter unten] (‚Between the Species‘, 1996), nahm ich Bezug auf diesen Elitismus und forderte seine Ausweitung: „Equality beyond Primatology“ („Gleichheit über die Primatologie hinaus“). Ich argumentierte im speziellen für den Einschluss von Vögeln, sowohl zu Schilderungszwecken und wegen ihrer selbst. Generell kritisierte ich, dass selbst eine nichtmenschliche „Person“ auf dem höchsten Level zu sein, in solch einem gedanklichen Universums ein armseliger Bewerber innerhalb der dort gegebenen Wertestandards bleibt: die Schimpansen mit denen man sich brüstet, teilen nach Singers Worten ihren Rang mit „intellektuell behinderten Menschen“ [A.d.Ü. 2, in dieser „Verknötung eines Arguments“, das gleichzeitig Tiere in der einen und Menschen mit Behinderung, in der anderen Weise in ein falsches und ungerechtes Licht rückt, wählt Davis die Kritik an der tierherabsetzenden Implikation, die sich quasi aus einer tatsächlichen gleichermaßen vorliegenden Herabsetzung von Neurodivergenz etc. ergibt. Dass sie den ableistischen Teil von Singers Argument hier beinahe zu bekräftigen scheint, mag eine Übernahme gesellschaftlicher Stereotype über intellectual disabilities geschuldet zu sein, sowie eine Zustimmung oder zumindest eine Ermangelung an Kritik gegenüber der Idee, dass man geistige Prozesse beim Menschen qualitativ und wertend-funktional hierarchisieren dürfte. Wer daraus nun eine Zuordnung zum Tierschutz-/Tierrechtsgruppenbereich der sog.

„Animal First“-Fraktion ableiten will, der sollte bedenken, dass die „Animal First“-Fraktion selbst stets ein biologistisches Konzept von Tieren aufrecht erhält oder stehen lassen muss, um sich nicht selbst ein Bein zu stellen, indem die ganze (mehr oder weniger kanonisierte tierobjektifizierende) Erkenntnisgeschichte der Menschheit auf den Kopf gestellt würde; und zweitens vollzieht Davis auf einer kulturanthropologisch einzuordnenden Ebene ja einen wohl schärfsten Antispeziesismus in zahlreichen ihrer Publikationen, auch wohl nicht zuletzt indem sie mit engen Analogismen arbeitet ...]. Wohin versetzt dies dann die Mehrheit des Tierreichs? Oder spezifischer, was ist mit den Vögeln?

Erwachsene nichtmenschliche Tiere, von Gorillas zu Perlhühnern, negoziieren jeden Tag komplexe Environments und führen eine Multiplizität kognitiver Akte durch, einschließlich praktischer Entscheidungstreffung [A.d.Ü. 3, wobei selbst das ein immernoch reduktiver Ansatz wäre: Tierkulturen sind gleichermaßen Komplex, wie alles Leben und alles Sein in seiner vollständigen Komplexität ohne eingrenzenden Blick, sondern mit offenem Auge und erstmal ohne die Einzwängung durch alte restriktive fixe Kategorien verkürzt „lebenspraktisch“ zusammengefasst werden dürfte, um die Fehler seiner ‚Gegenseite‘ hier zu vermeiden]. Erwachsene Tiere verkörpern ein Repertoire von Erfahrungen, das ihr Wachstum begleitet, so dass es Unsinn ist dies mit dem Erfahrungsrepertoire menschlicher Babys und dem kognitiv Behinderter [A.d.Ü. 4, alle Erfahrungsstadien sind bedeutsam; der Haken ist nicht, ‚das Baby‘ oder ‚der Mensch mit Be-Hinderung‘, sondern die gesellschaftliche Zuordnung als „(noch) nicht ‚voll‘ entwickelt“ – was in sich problematisch ist, wenn auch in einen äußerst begrenzten Bereich halt teilfunktional argumentierend. Sowohl die Entwicklung von Babys, also auch das Be-Hindertsein als Mensch, als auch das Tiersein oder Nichtmenschsein, als auch das „nichtbehinderte-“ oder „nicht mehr kindliche-“ Menschsein betreffen mehr Fragen von „Sein“ und „Existenz“ „als Solche“ überhaupt, als eine Aufteilung in Gruppen nach durch Menschen vermutete „Funktionen“, die (Subjekt-), „Sein“-im-(Welt-), „Sein“ einnehmen solle] gleichzusetzen. Faires Plädieren erfordert, dass wir aufhören andere Tiere vor uns selbst dadurch zu „verteidigen“ indem wir sie als „dumm“ bezeichnen. So wie die menschliche verbale Sprache eine der vielen Sprachen des Lebens ist, so ist unsere Art der Intelligenz eine unter vielen. Wenn Menschen sich durch die Idee der Gleichheit über die Primatologie hinausgehend bedroht fühlen, ist das unser Problem dies zu lösen.

Die Frage wurde vor einigen Jahren kristallisiert durch Carl Sagan in seinem Buch ‚The Dragons of Eden‘ (1977). Um dahingehend zu argumentieren, dass immerhin einige „Bestien/Viecher“ (‚beasts‘) Verstand anwenden – was ihnen Punkte einbringen sollte, in Richtung dessen einige „Rechte“ zu erlangen – kontrastiert Sagan Schimpansen und ein Huhn in einer anekdotischen Beobachtung aus den Annalen der frühen Tierethologie. Ein Forscher berichtet wie er zwei Schimpansen dabei beobachtet, wie sie ein Huhn mit Nahrung anlocken, während sie ein Stück Draht versteckt halten. Wie Charlie Brown zu dem Fußball, kam das Huhn, der Schilderung zufolge, immer wieder zurück um bloß wieder reingelegt zu werden. Dies zeigte nach Sagens Ansicht, dass „Hühner eine sehr geringe Fähigkeit besitzen, Vermeidensverhalten zu erlernen,“ wobei die Schimpansen „eine feine Kombination von einem Verhalten zeigten, dass man manchmal für ein ausschließlich menschliches hält: Kooperation, einen Ablauf in die Zukunft voranzuplanen, Irreführung und Grausamkeit.“ So

könnten Schimpansen betrachtet werden als Kandidaten für Rechte, aber Hühner könnten es nicht.

Trotz des Trends dahingehend Menschenaffen einen besonderen Status zu erteilen, und dadurch vielleicht die Tür für alle Tiere zu öffnen, hat sich materiell für keine Tiere in dieser Hinsicht irgendetwas verändert. Sie verrotten noch immer für die Küchen oder die Wissenschaften oder was sonst noch immer. Jedoch gibt es da einen Wechsel am Horizont für Hühner. Und obgleich es bloß ein Nanoshift ist, bin ich doch froh darüber.

Sich auf die Hühner „vorbereiten“

Wer war es der sagte, „Ich bin so tief unten; ich erkläre hiermit, dass ich auf das Unten nach oben schaue?“ Wenn wir uns zum Beispiel einen Misthaufen vorstellen, dann stellen Sie sich den Schimpansen auf der Spitze hockend ganz oben vor und die Hühner um den unteren Teil des Haufens herumwuselnd. Das ist so etwa wie es war, als ich mich in den Späten 80ern dazu entschloss eine Verteidigungsgruppe für Hühner zu starten, und mir von manchen gesagt wurde dass, wenn ich mich schon mit Farmtieren „abgeben“ würde, dann sollte ich doch lieber Schweine wählen, weil die Leute für Hühner noch nicht „weit genug“ wären. So sitze ich nun aber hier und studiere aufmerksam die Medienberichte darüber, dass, indem McDonalds minimale Tierschutz-Standards für seine weltweiten Belieferer von Lebensmittelprodukten setzt, das Unternehmen dies zuerst in bezug auf die Hühner zur kommerziellen Eierproduktion machen wird – und nicht weniger. Und ich denke, ist sei nun nicht interessant? Wirklich verblüffend. Am Anfang eines neuen Jahrhunderts – eines neuen Jahrtausends sogar – wurde das Huhn, über das gesagt wurde, dass die Leute dafür noch nicht so weit wären, heraus aus der tiefsten Vergessenheit gezogen in das Rampenlicht mit zu dem Schimpansen. Welch einen Unterschied ein Jahrzehnt machen kann.

Ich fühle mich dabei zu vereinfachend dies zu sagen. Ich selbst schaue nicht hoch auf das Unten, außer in stellvertretender Weise, und ich bin nicht froh über die Lage und das Schicksal von Hühnern. Ich bin kein Optimist was die intellektuellen Ebenen anbetrifft; aber im Willen. Dennoch, die Botschaft über die normalisierte Misshandlung dieser Vögel geht hinaus in die Welt. Ich weiß es als Tatsache, dass es tausende Menschen in diesem Land gibt, denen Hühner ernsthaft etwas bedeuten; und ich weiß, dass es möglich ist, Leute die vorher niemals über sie nachgedacht haben, dazu anzuregen für ihre Situation eine starke Sorge mitzutragen. Ich habe gesehen, dass dies geschehen kann, weil ich an der vordersten Front dabei stehe dies mitzubewirken. Zum Beispiel konnte ich einen Journalisten, der niemals über die „Zwangsmauser“ gehört hatte – die Praxis der Eierindustrie, Hennen 10 bis 14 Tage lang die Nahrung zu verweigern, was dazu führt, dass sie ihre Federn verlieren, um somit die Produktion von Eiern zu manipulieren – dazu bewegen, einen Cover-Bericht für die Washington Post (30.4.2000) über das Thema zu schreiben. Ein anderer Journalist dieser Zeitung schrieb einen Feature über meine Arbeit als Gründerin und Vorsitzende von United Poultry Concerns („For the Birds“, 14.10.1999), der mit einem *Ark Trust Genesis Award* für Reportagen über Tierthemen im Jahr 2000 ausgezeichnet wurde.

Wenn ich jetzt über die Veränderungen hinsichtlich von Hühnern rede, dann spreche ich nicht bloß über die Medienaufmerksamkeit, sondern über Einstellungen. Niemand sagt mehr zu mir, dass die Leute noch nicht „weit genug“ für Hühner seien. Die Aufmerksamkeit wird endlich der größten Anzahl misshandelter warmblütiger Vertebraten auf dem Planeten zuteil, sowohl in den Tierverschutzgruppen als auch in der öffentlichen Domäne, in den Vereinigten Staaten sowohl als auch in Großbritannien. Die enorme Popularität des Kinofilms ‚Chicken Run‘ im letzten Jahr, indem es um emotive Knetanimationshühner ging, die eine Flucht aus einer Eierfarm planen, gibt auch Gründe zur Hoffnung. Aber da ist weitaus mehr. Bedenken Sie das Folgende: vor kurzem durchgeführte Umfragen zeigten, dass Amerikaner dazu bereit sind, mehr für Eier zu zahlen die von Hennen kommen, die weniger inhuman behandelt werden. Letztes Jahr wurde in Kalifornien ein Gesetzentwurf eingereicht, der vorschlug, die Zwangsmauser von Hühnern zu verbieten. Dieses Jahr wurden in Illinois und im Staat Washington zwei Gesetzentwürfe eingereicht, die diese Praxis ebenfalls verbieten würden. Der Staat Washington hat auch einen Gesetzesvorschlag erwägt, der die Haltung von Hennen in kleinen Käfigen und die Entschnabelung, zur Kontrolle ihres gestörten Verhaltens in der Einsperr-Haltung, verbieten würde. Obgleich die Gesetzentwürfe durch Agrarkomitees verhindert wurden, indizieren diese Vorschläge starke öffentliche Bedenken. Während die Vereinigten Staaten in dem Punkten weit hinter Europa herhinken – in Europa ist nicht nur die Zwangsmauser verboten, sondern auch gesetzlich entschieden worden, dass ab dem Jahr 2012, Hennen nicht mehr in Batteriekäfigen gehalten werden dürfen – hat die U.S. Eierindustrie unter zunehmenden Druck für das Jahr 2012 lediglich festgelegt, dass jede Henne 43 Quadratzentimeter Platz im Käfig haben soll, statt dem derzeitigen Standard von 30 Quadratzentimetern.

Die Misshandlung von Hühnern zur Unterhaltung wird auch zunehmend als unakzeptabler angesehen. 1998 haben sich die Wähler von Missouri und Arizona für das Verbot von Hahnenkämpfen entschieden; Oklahoma wird bald nachziehen. Im letzten Jahr wurden zwei Misshandelnde von Hühnern der Grausamkeit an Tieren schuldig gesprochen: Ein Discjockey aus Denver, der ein Huhn aus dem Balkon warf, um dessen Leiden aufzuzeichnen und zu senden, und ein Eierfarmer der Tausende Hühner in ihrer Käfigen zu Tode hungern ließ, weil er sich den Umweltschutzgesetzen des Staates Washington nicht beugen wollte.

Anfänge zu sehen, dass Hühner verteidigt werden, nach der herrschenden langen Phase der Vergessenheit und Verunglimpfung, die die Tiere seit der Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts erlitten haben, als diese erdbeständigsten und erddurstigsten aller Vögel aus der amerikanischen Landschaft verschwanden, ist genug, um mich zum Weinen zu bringen. Das ist genau was ich vor einigen Jahren an einem Flughafen tat, nicht durch irgendeine Wahrnehmung, dass ein Flugzeug eine Form der aviaren Evolution ist, sondern weil ich in ein Buch vertieft war mit dem Titel ‚The Development of Brain and Behaviour in the Chicken‘ (1995) von der Vogelforscherin Lesley Rogers. Die Emotionen, die mich am Flughafen erschüttert haben, rührten von Rogers, die in dem Buch Dinge sagte, wie: „es [ist] jetzt klar, dass Vögel kognitive Kapazitäten haben, die mit denen von Säugetieren, selbst derer von Primaten, äquivalent sind“ und dass sie „mit einem zunehmenden Wissen über das Verhalten und die

kognitiven Fähigkeiten vom Huhn, zu der Erkenntnis gekommen [ist], dass das Huhn keine minderwertige Spezies ist, die als ein bloßer Nahrungslieferant behandelt werden kann.“

Dies waren die Worte einer Wissenschaftlerin. Ich wünschte mir dann wie auch jetzt, dass ich diese Worte in das Denken jedes existierenden Menschen und jeder folgenden Generation eingravieren könnte. Es war dieser mich drängende Impuls, der mich schließlich dazu führte die Gruppe United Poultry Concerns ins Leben zu rufen, nachdem ich ein Huhn namens Viva getroffen hatte. Es ist keine Übertreibung zu sagen, dass Viva mein Leben verändert hat. Von dem Moment an, als ich sie aus einem schlammigen Schuppen in Maryland gezogen habe und ich ihr Gesicht sah, wusste ich, dass ich eine Geschichte berichten musste, die mich niemals wieder gehen lassen würde. Ich habe dafür gelebt den Tag zu erleben, an dem das Huhn sowie der Schimpanse beginnen werden gemeinsam Aufmerksamkeit zu erhalten, und dafür bin ich dankbar und halb-hochgestimmt, obgleich noch sehr weit entfernt davon zufrieden zu sein.

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[Diese Serie wird noch um einen weiteren Text von Davis zum gleichen Thema ergänzt werden.]

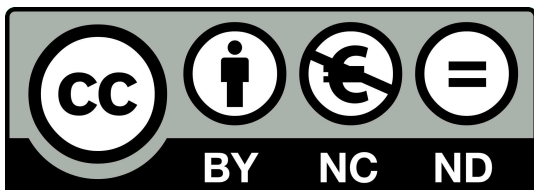
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